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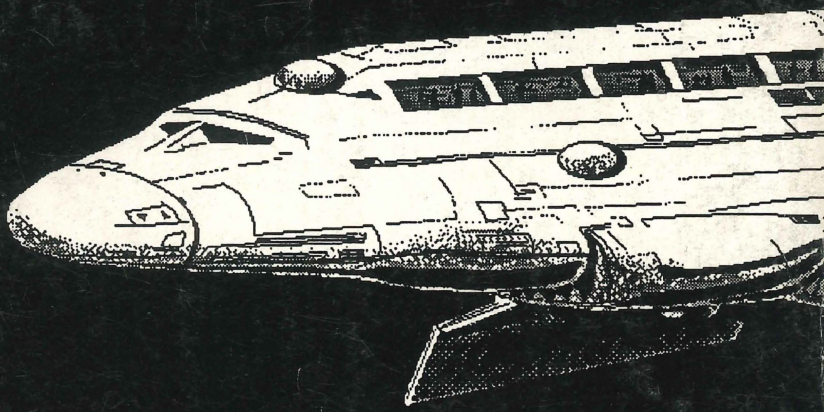
the TRAVELLERS' Digest

Adventure Number 4 3.95

The Gold of Zurrian

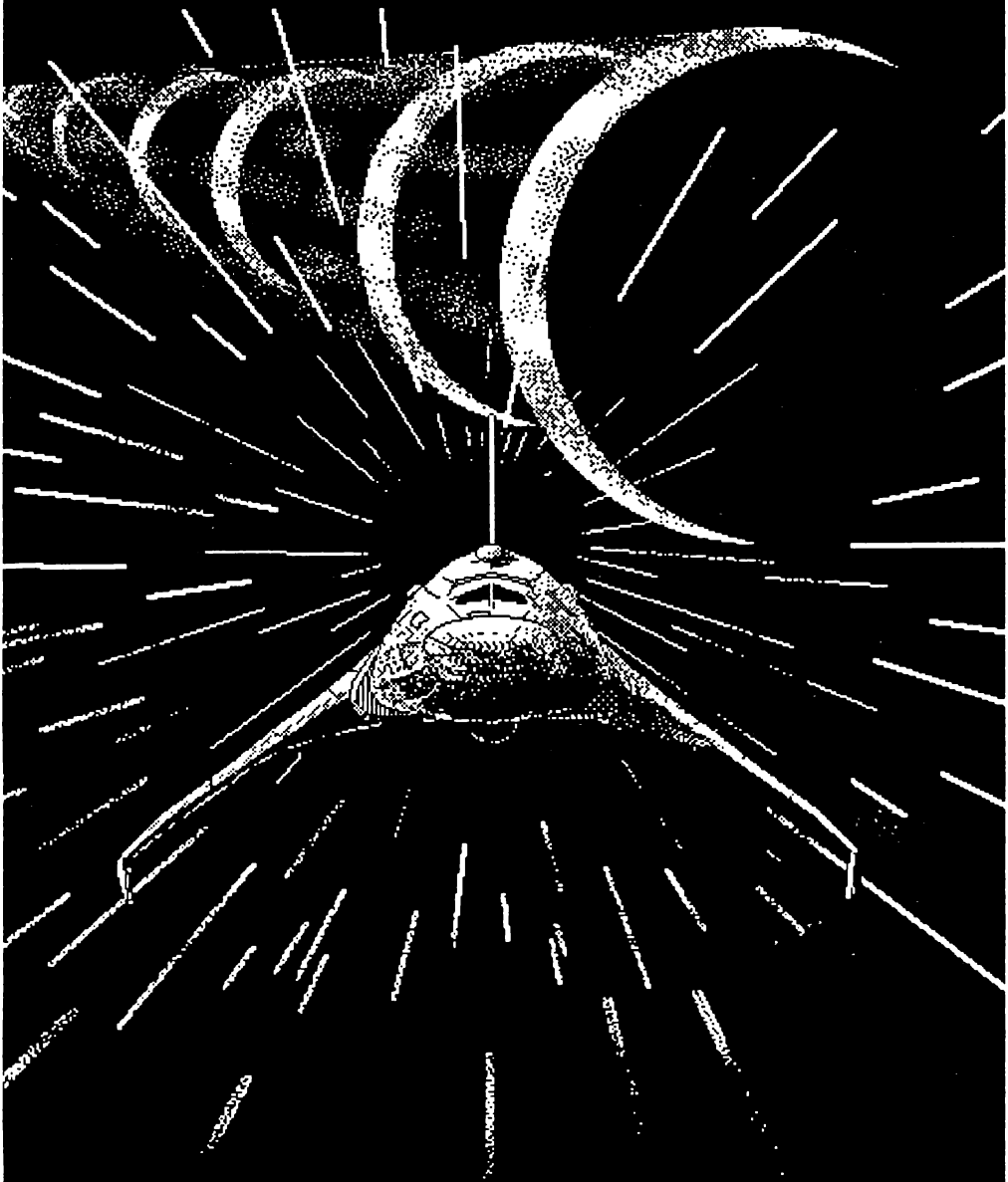


The quarterly adventure magazine devoted to GDW's Game of The Far Future, *Traveller*®

Digest Group Publications

The Gold of Zurrian

FEATURE ADVENTURE



...life in jump space must go on, just as it goes on in the real universe: there is happiness and sadness, pleasure and pain, birth and death...

—Akidda Laagiir

1102, from 'JumpSpace' in the Travellers' Digest

Credits for the Feature Adventure:
Written by Gary L. Thomas
Helpful suggestions by Kristie Fields
Gold of Zurrian Ship Plans by Guy Garnett

Playtesting...
Joe Fugate, Patty Fugate, Nancy Parker, Robert Parker, Colin Robertson, Craig Sweigart, Nona Sweigart

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The Travellers' Digest

Adventure Number 4 **$3.95**

Editors' Digest 4

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EDITORS' DIGEST

This issue marks the end of our first year as the *Travellers' Digest*, and what a year it has been! Our four characters, starting "behind the claw" in Deneb Sector in Issue 1, are now halfway to Capital. Following their Grand Tour itinerary, they have had significant encounters with the Zhodani and Vargr races, visited several exciting worlds, been knighted by the Duke of Deneb, and...we still have plenty of adventure in store for them in future issues. Next quarter...Vland, capital of the old First Imperium.

In last issue's "Editors' Digest", we mentioned that we would have an "all-new **Traveller** product" at the ORIGINS 86 game convention in July. You read it here first: our printers will deliver *Grand Survey*, by J. Andrew Keith, to us on June 1 of this year. This book, long-awaited by Traveller fans, gives referees and players practical, easy-to-use methods for exploring and detailing individual worlds in Traveller.

To help us celebrate this event, Keith will use Vland as an example of using **Grand Survey** in Issue 5. Complementing his article will be an essay by Marc W. Miller on "The First Imperium". We feel very fortunate to be able to bring you two of Traveller's finest authors in one issue.

We are also proud to announce another product available in time for ORIGINS. Game Designers' Workshop will publish Book 8: *Robots*, written by the staff here at Digest Group Publications. It will include some of our earlier material on robots printed in Issues 1 to 3 of the *Travellers' Digest*, as well as page after page of new material. If you'll be in Los Angeles, July 2-6, stop by our booth (we're next to GDW this year) and we'd be happy to autograph your copy.

If you've seen GDW's advertisements for computer software, but were disappointed because you had the wrong computer, we may be able to help you out. We are now marketing "Disk 1:*WordGen/Bestiary*" and "Disk 2:Forms & Art", two disks for the Apple Macintosh. *WordGen* and *Bestiary* are two programs developed by GDW for use with Traveller. Order from us for only $18.50 plus $1.50 postage and handling. Please specify in your order whether you want MSBASIC source code or a stand-alone version.

"Forms & Art", available for the same price, contains MacPaint and MacDraw documents, including world, subsector, and sector map grids, and a collection of the more popular illustrations from the *Travellers' Digest*.

We All Make Mistakes Department: we offer apologies to Terrel Munden, whose name was accidentally omitted from the list of playtesters for Issue 3.

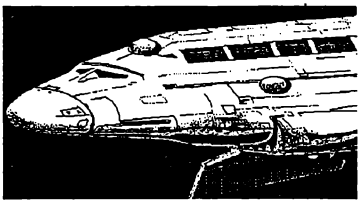
Also in this issue, we've revised the description of our Universal Task Profile system to fit completely on two pages. The feedback we have received so far is favorable; we'd like to know how the rest of you feel about the UTP system. Do you want us to use it more? Less? Is it easy to use? Send us your comments.

We continue to improve our quality. This issue is four pages longer than previous issues, and we have used a smaller type face, so we can give you more for your money. We are also keeping our advertisement space to a minimum, so the fifty-six pages you get in the *Travellers' Digest* is packed with Traveller excitement. These changes cost us more, but we are not raising our price. Despite a larger magazine, we lacked the room to print "Effective Role Playing: Part 1". This will appear next issue.

We now have dealers on three continents of Terra. If your local dealer doesn't stock our products, you may be missing out.

The Gold of Zurrian

FEATURE ADVENTURE



The Gold of Zurrian tells of a group of friends as they travel through jump space, and of the unusual collection of individuals they meet on board ship. It is assumed that this adventure will be administered by a referee who has read through it, and who is familiar with both this adventure and the rules for **Traveller.** The basic **Traveller** rules are all that is required. Paper, pencils, and six-sided dice are needed; square-grid graph paper and a calculator are helpful.

Optional References: Additional helpful information may be found in:

- Alien Module 3, *Vargr*
- Supplement 8, *Library Data (A-M)*
- Supplement 11, *Library Data (N-Z)*
- *The Atlas of the Imperium*
- Adventure 11, *Murder on Arcturus Station*
- "Jumpspace", *The Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society No. 24*
- Adventure 13, *Signal GK*

The only background information required for this adventure is contained in this issue of *The Travellers' Digest..*

Chapters: This adventure is in several chapters, most of which are material to be read only by the referee.

This introduction may be read by both the players and the referee.

The chapter *"Pomp and Circumstance"* introduces the characters and the situation. This section is designed to be read to the players in order to acquaint them with the characters and their personalities.

The rest of the adventure is for the referee only; players may discover its secrets only by playing the adventure.

STANDARDS AND ASSUMPTIONS

This adventure takes place in the universe published and described by a multitude of **Traveller** products.

The Imperium is a huge human-dominated stellar empire thirty centuries in the future. It encompasses several hundred light-years of our segment of the Milky Way galaxy.

The Vland Sector is a 32 by 40 parsec (1 parsec = 3.26 light-years) area of the Imperium near the Imperial frontier. A sector is divided into sixteen administrative areas called subsectors. Each subsector is 8 by 10 parsecs in size.

A world is commonly listed with its name followed by a slash and the name of its subsector location. For example, Newcastle/Anarsi refers to the world *Newcastle* in the *Anarsi* subsector.

Dates: All dates herein correspond to the Imperial calendar. The starting date of this adventure is 324-1101.

Place: This adventure takes place on board the Tukera Lines ship, *Gold of Zurrian,* en route between Gishuli/Voskhod (Vland 0709) and Iren/Kagamira in Vland Sector.

CHARACTERS

This adventure is intended for the characters listed. Feel free to change any or all of the genders as desired. Additional background information for these characters can be found in other issues of *The Travellers' Digest.*

Akidda Laagiir, journalist 858AAB Age 43 6 terms Cr 28,000
Born: 319-1058 on Mora/Mora
Interview-5, Streetwise-3, Grav Vehicle-1, Wheeled Vehicle-1, Admin-1, Brawling-1 Possessions: TL 15 Holocrystal Recorder

Position: Current recipient of the *Travellers' Digest* Touring Award.

Akidda Laagiir started at the age of eighteen as a copy boy with the *Mora World Review;* his friendly face and his ability to get people to trust him contributed to his steady career progress. Living on Mora, with its charismatic dictator, the Duchess Delphine the Matriarch, is sometimes a trying experience for any journalist, which may explain his occasionally iconoclastic actions. He is slightly prejudiced against "the system", preferring fresh ideas and fresh ways of doing things.

His admin skill was learned while moving up the ranks, but it is a skill that he would just as soon not need: he much prefers cutting through to the heart of a situation. While he is sensitive to the needs of others, he has a well developed self-preservation instinct that allows him to quickly adapt to strange locales and cultures—a skill that has saved his neck many times.

Akidda's most prominent skill is his interviewing ability. By his knowledge of psychology, body language, and oral communication, he has a good chance of discerning someone's feelings and drawing him out.

Akidda Laagiir received the *Travellers' Digest* Touring Award for his article on the role of the spinward frontier sectors in shaping the growth of the Imperium in the next 1000 years.

Dur Telemon, ex-scout B7A85B Age 34 3 terms Cr 65,000
Born: 038-1067 on Mora/Mora
Auto Pistol-3, Survival-2, Pilot-1, Grav Vehicle-1, Engineer-1, Gambling-1, Brawling-1 Possessions: Auto Pistol

Dur Telemon was *born* into the Scout service. His father was in the Scout service while Dur was growing up, and both of his grandfathers served in the Scouts in their younger days. Dur enjoyed nothing more as a boy than to sit and listen to their tales of adventure. The Fourth Frontier War broke out when Dur was a teenager—his father's service in the war was a source of pride for the entire family.

Dur's individualistic nature meshed well with his duties in the Exploration Office

of the Scout Service. In his first term, a "routine" mapping expedition on Pannet/Rhylanor suddenly turned into a hostage rescue operation, and it was then that Dur happened to save Dr. Krenstein's life.

The harsh conditions Dur often encountered taught him much about staying alive and living off the land in exotic environments.

Dur has resigned from the Scouts and is travelling with his uncle, Akidda Laagiir.

Dr. Theodor Krenstein, scientist 495FCB Age 59 10 terms Cr 300,000
Born: 173-1042 on Rhylanor/Rhylanor
Computer-4, Leader-3, JOT-2, Laser Rifle-1, Grav Vehicle-1, Electronics-1, Medical-1, Mechanical-1

Possessions: Hand Computer (TL15), Electronic Tool Kit, Robot AB-101

Position: Graz Redniz Chair of Computational Robotics at Rhylanor Institute of Technology on Rhylanor/Rhylanor (on sabbatical leave).

Dr. Theodor Krenstein is a gifted, multi-talented scientist, with interests ranging from anthropology and archaeology to xenology and zoology, including most of the "ologies" in between. He holds advanced degrees in computer science and robotics.

After three terms as Dean of the School of Robotic Science at the Rhylanor Institute of Technology, he was appointed to the Graz Redniz Chair of Computational Robotics, a prestigious and coveted position. He has to his credit 12 books, over 100 articles in technical and scientific journals, and holds more than 250 Imperial patents for his inventions and computer work. Despite this, he has become bored with academic life, and realizing his age, he has taken an extended sabbatical in order to make forays into other parts of the Imperium.

During a test of Scout survey robots in 1090 on Pannet/Rhylanor, members of a disgruntled anti-technist group kidnapped Dr. Krenstein and threatened to kill him if the Scout service didn't meet their demands. A young scout named Dur Telemon was part of the all-volunteer raiding team that finally freed Dr. Krenstein; in fact, Dur was the first to reach the Doctor.

In the following year, Dr. Krenstein constructed his personal servant and bodyguard, AB-101.

Aybee Wan Owen, valet FD9C7B Age 19(?) 0 terms Cr 0
Constructed: 1091 on Rhylanor/Rhylanor
Medic-1, Linguist-1, Vehicle-1, Laser Welder-1

Position: Personal servant and protégé of Dr. Theodor Krenstein.

AB-101, affectionately known as "Aybee", is a pseudo-biological robot designed and constructed by Dr. Krenstein. His UPP, skill levels, and other personal data are approximations, calculated by comparing human norms with Aybee's abilities. Although his programming gives him certain basic abilities, because of his lack of true artificial intelligence he can make errors in judgment; in abstract situations, this effectively lowers his true skill level.

Aybee's "weapon" is a light laser welder, built into his right arm. Dr.

Krenstein has designed Aybee in such a way that his arm (ostensibly used only as a tool) can pass inspection by officials, since laser welders are not restricted by local law levels; however, voice override controls allow Dr. Krenstein to use Aybee as a weapon at short range.

Because Dr. Krenstein ordinarily conceals Aybee's true nature, Aybee was mistakenly granted knighthood in the Order of the Emperors' Guard along with the others, after certain events on Jode/Pretoria. Such an occurrence would be most humiliating to the emperor, so it has become imperative that Aybee's "true identity" not become a matter of public knowledge.

Arda

Marquis

Marchioness

Terra

Melissa

Onggzou

Captain Udan

The NPCs — Players' Aid

NPCs

Onggzou (Dhaer) 39598A Age 47 7 terms Cr 31,000
(Vargr ex-emissary, ex-corsair) Born: 122-1054
Liaison-4, Leader-3, Ship's Boat-2, Streetwise-2, Auto Pistol-2, Bribery-1, Vacc Suit-1, Forward Observer-1, Infighting-1

Possessions: Corsair

Position: Dhaer (Listener) for Kagamira, Vhodan, and Anarsi subsectors.

Onggzou is suave, debonair, and well-dressed, as befits his position with the Church of the Chosen Ones.

Onggzou spent three terms as an emissary, and his ability to deal with humans is astounding. His Galanglic is fluent and without accent. He seems to be even-tempered and is easy to get along with in conversation. All of these traits were learned in his early days in the Church. Because of his abilities, he has reached the position of Dhaer (Listener) for the subsectors of Kagamira, Vhodan, and Anarsi in Vland. This important area has a population makeup of roughly 95% humans and 5% Vargr. Onggzou is ideal for this role.

Vargr corsairs under his direction took over Newcastle/Anarsi (see "Library Data for the Sector") for the Church about six months ago. He is travelling in this area to spread this news among the faithful, consolidating his political power.

He dresses ornately, in a style appealing to other Vargr. His pants are bright blue, and his shirt is yellow, with a green design of the Church's artifact on his chest. He also wears a floor-length cloak of surshi cloth (see "Library Data for the Sector" under Zurrian/Vland).

Around his waist, he wears a belt consisting of 19 gold coynes. Each has a hole drilled through its center, and they are held together by a magenta plasteel cord. All of the coynes are similar to certain coynes found at Ancient sites; each shows the image of a Vargr. If questioned about the belt, Onggzou will claim that the coynes are Ancient artifacts. While it is true that the design of each coyne is modeled after certain artifacts, the belt was actually specially made for Onggzou at a factory in the Vargr Extents.

Onggzou and his two assistant priests (travelling in mid-passage) are supposedly travelling to Vland; their actual mission is to kidnap the Marquis and Marchioness of Daama. Toward this end, the Vargr may try to take over the ship.

Onggzou is experienced and serious (most of the time), cunning and not to be trusted. His assistants, who may remain unseen during the adventure, are not as charismatic or as nicely dressed as their leader.

After they meet, Onggzou will try to convince Dr. Krenstein that the Church is valid, using arguments from Krenstein's knowledge of robotics. A typical line of argument might run as follows: "Dr. Krenstein, have you ever dreamed of creating a living being? A creature that thinks and acts on its own? If you tried to create such a being, would you try to make it better than a Vargr or worse than a Vargr? Would you try to make it better or worse than a Zhodani, or a Solomani, or a Vilani, or a Hiver, or an Aslan, or a K'kree?

"Of course you would try to make it better than any of these. And if you could make it better, then the robot you made would be the best of all living beings. This is what the Ancients did when they created the Vargr race, and this fact is the founding tenet of our Church."

Onggzou occupies room number 10.

Marquis of Gemid 5A69AD Age 67 7 terms Cr 35,000
(noble) Born: 102-1034
SMG-3, Engineering-2, Jack of All Trades-1

Position: Marquis of Gemid in the Vland sector
The Marquis and his wife, the Marchioness, are the hereditary rulers of Daama (1904 Anarsi), a quiet, non-industrial planet jump-2 from the Imperial border. The marquis's weak rule over the system, together with a gas giant and a class-B starport, makes Daama a haven for smugglers.

Daama is non-aligned, and has a population of about 42,000. Its law level is high enough to restrict shotguns and more powerful weapons, but there are not enough law enforcement agents on the planet to enforce this outside of the starport. Many smugglers have set up their own down starports, using Daama's main starport only when special repairs are necessary.

Historically, the Marquis of Gemid ruled the area including all the worlds within jump-2 of Gemid (1903 Anarsi), but during the Long Night these worlds regained their independence, and the ruling power of the marquis ended. The current title "Marquis of Gemid" is an anachronism that the rulers of Daama reinstituted for themselves several hundred years ago.

The Marquis and his wife enjoy their noble status, and they tend to flaunt it when travelling in the Imperium. This is ironic, because the pair have no real official status outside of Daama. Some of these exploits, including interfering with Imperial Naval and Scout personnel, are included in Terra Porphyry's forthcoming book on nobles.

The Imperium puts up with the Marquis and Marchioness, because the Imperium would like to sign a treaty with Daama, setting it up as a client state, or even as a full member of the Imperium. With the report in Terra's book, and the expected public reaction, the Marquis and Marchioness would no longer be accorded any special treatment within the Imperium.

The marquis looks about 50 years old, younger than his actual age, but his rich lifestyle has made him overweight.

The Marquis occupies room number 16.

Marchioness of Gemid 7C1A8D Age 33 3 terms Cr (see above)
(noble) Born: 313-1068
Laser Pistol-3

Position: Marchioness of Gemid in the Vland sector (see above)
The Marchioness of Gemid is considerably younger than her husband, but looking at her it would be hard to tell this. She takes no interest in ruling Daama, but she does enjoy the special privileges her noble status brings her. She is the instigator of many of the demands that her husband occasionally makes within the Imperium.

She has one hobby which consumes much of her spare time: sport shooting. She is well known among amateur shooters as a crack shot with a laser pistol. She has a number of trophies from marksmanship contests around Vland sector.

The Marchioness occupies room number 15.

Captain Gemashmim Udan 494A44 Age 48 7 terms Cr 21,000
(ex-scout) Born: 301-1053
Laser Carbine-3, Gunnery-2, Electronics-2, Pilot-1, Air/Raft-1, Medical-1, Mechanical-1, Grav Vehicle-1, Jack of All Trades-1, Sword-1

Possessions: Sword, Laser Carbine
Position: Captain of the Gold of Zurrian
Gemashmim Udan served seven terms in the Imperial Scout service before retiring and taking his present position as captain of a Tukera Lines 1000-ton long-liner. His tenure in the Scouts exposed him to a wide variety of experiences, and he has a basic understanding of all the functions the ship requires.

He expects things to be shipshape, but he is not overdemanding, and he gets along well with his crew. His ship is efficient, orderly, safe, and profitable to Tukera, and Captain Udan plans to keep it that way.

Udan had a brief mention in Terra Porphyry's book about the Scout Service (see below), in connection with a kickback scheme involving Scout Supply Officers in Parsi subsector of Vland. An official investigation resulted in the court martial of three Scouts and fines levied against twelve contractors; Udan was cleared of any wrongdoing.

Udan occupies room number 6.

Terra Porphyry 528987 Age 58 8 terms Cr 41,000
(journalist) Born: 091-1043
Persuasion-4, Interview-2, Jack of All Trades-2, Dagger-2, Leader-2, Forgery-2, Streetwise-1, Communications-1, Liaison-1, Admin-1

Possessions: TAS, TL 15 Holocrystal Recorder, Dagger.
Terra Porphyry is an author whose books have been best-sellers in every sector of the Imperium. The opinions in her books are always controversial, and she is expert at marshalling facts together to sway public opinion to her side.

Terra Porphyry was born and reared on Rhylanor/Rhylanor. She attended the Rhylanor Institute of Technology, and while there she became engaged to another student, Theodor Krenstein. The engagement was broken a few months later, when Terra left Rhylanor to see other parts of the Imperium.

To earn money, she did free-lance journalism for various publications wherever she was travelling at the time. She got better and better at this, ultimately reaching the position she now holds, as a writer of popular but controversial books. Some critics accuse her of yellow journalism, exploiting and distorting the facts only to attract readers.

Her first book, New Dogs and Old Tricks, claimed to expose the Vargr Church of the Chosen Ones as a fraud, lining its leaders' pockets while deceiving the Church faithful. Church officials were disappointed with how readily others accepted most of the claims in the book, but rather than attract attention to the situation, they have ignored her.

Following the success of her first book, she wrote Hide and Seek: The Imperial Scouts, detailing supposed lax administration of the Scout Service, and

certain abuses that resulted from this. Officially, the Scouts denied any truth to the book, but there were administrative changes made in the Scouts because of the public reaction to the book.

One of the incidents described in Hide and Seek was the kidnapping of Krenstein on Pannet/Rhylanor during testing of Scout robot surveying equipment. The view of the book was that the Scouts were interfering with the rights of the planet's inhabitants. Theodor Krenstein and Dur Telemon were both mentioned, and Akidda Laagiir's account (from the Mora World Review) was quoted at length. Terra Porphyry severely criticized those involved, and Akidda has always felt that his words were taken out of context to prove Terra's point.

Terra's current work in progress is about Imperial nobles. None of the nobility who know of this is looking forward to this book's publication.

Terra Porphyry is in the process of getting a divorce from her estranged husband, Arda Le (see below).

Terra occupies room number 9.

Arda Le 158977 Age 58 6 terms Cr -323,000
(ex-bureaucrat) Born: 140-1043
Air/Raft-3, Dagger-2, Admin-2, Brawling-1, Interrogation-1

Arda Le is a "retired" Tukera Lines executive, travelling through the area together with his companion, Melissa Diimish. They get a special discount on passage because of his former association with the company.

It is true that Arda was an important Tukera executive in Corridor sector, but he was fired (not retired) when company officials discovered he was a compulsive gambler. He is now thousands of credits in debt, and he is travelling to put as much distance as possible between himself and his loan shark.

He met Melissa about six months ago, and she has been travelling with him since. She is not aware that he was fired, or that he is so heavily in debt. She does know that he is married, and that he is going through a messy divorce proceeding. He has told her that he is wealthy because of his Tukera duties, and that his wife, Terra Porphyry, is trying to cheat him out of this money.

Arda is middle-aged, with little hair, and he looks more tired than handsome. He thinks that Melissa is interested only in his money, but he doesn't really care, because he doesn't really have any.

Arda occupies room number 12.

Melissa Diimish 8A8C64 Age 39 5 terms Cr 25,000
(other) Born: 206-1062
Wheeled Veh-2, JOT-1, Medic-1, Streetwise-1, Dagger-1, Electronic-1

Melissa met Arda Le about six months ago, and has been travelling with him ever since. She has appeared in a few movies on her home world, but was never very successful as an actress.

Melissa occupies room number 14.

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

At Tech Level 14+ a new type of special purpose laser pistol becomes available: the Integral Laser Pistol (the pistol is used in this adventure, but it is not available to the players). It contains a miniaturized, disposable power pack with enough energy for three shots. The power pack can not be recharged. The entire device masses 2.5 kg and costs Cr 12,000. It is illegal at law level 1+. Treat it as a laser carbine when rolling for hits.

description	*weight*	*tech level*	*price*
Integral Laser Pistol	2.5 kg	TL14	Cr 12,000
Disposable Power Pack	0.5 kg	TL14	Cr 2,500

THE UNIVERSAL TASK PROFILE

In all our adventures we use the UNIVERSAL TASK PROFILE or **UTP**, which provides you with all the information you need about a task to be performed. Using the UTP you can quickly roll for a task attempt and know:

- the relative difficulty of the task;
- which skills and character attributes are useful;
- if the task is hazardous;
- how long the task attempt takes;
- if you can retry the task in the event of an unsuccessful attempt;
- if a mishap occurred while attempting the task.

In addition, you can:

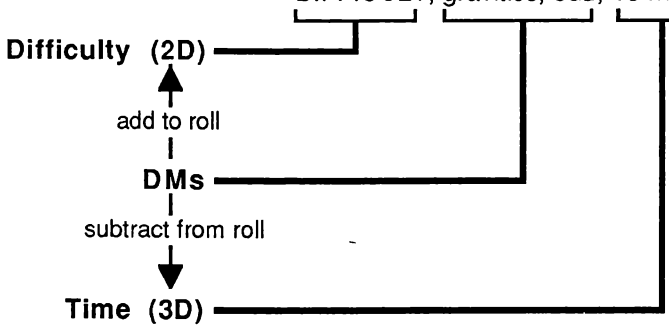
- rapidly determine the effects of a mishap;
- discern the extent of the damage;
- know what tasks are needed to proceed with repairs.

In short, the UTP system provides a comprehensive and playable framework for defining and attempting tasks. We encourage you to make liberal use of it. A complete summary of the UTP procedures is on the following two pages.

UTP: Universal Task Profile—handling tasks in *Traveller*

FORMAT: To repair major damage to an Air/Raft:

DIFFICULT, gravitics, edu, 15 min.



Difficulty... Roll 2D for success. The success roll needed for each difficulty level is shown on the DIFFICULTY table, below.
For example, a roll of 11+ is needed to succeed at a DIFFICULT task.

DMs...*Add* to difficulty roll (improves chances)
Subtract from time roll (shortens task duration)
DMs are typically listed as *crucial skill(s)* and *crucial characteristic(s)* (represents skill(s) and characteristic(s) judged most crucial to task success).
•*crucial skill(s):* use skill level as DM.
•*crucial characteristic(s):* characteristic÷ 5 (drop fractions; DM range is 0 to 3).
E.g.,gravitics-3 (skill DM of 3) and edu 9 (charactistic DM of 1) = total DM of 4.
NOTES: **If no skill** (not even skill level-0) in the crucial skill, make task harder (at least DIFFICULT, perhaps even IMPOSSIBLE). Ref's option: (int + edu)÷5 can substitute for lack of skill (represents all the intellect, knowledge, and experience brought to bear); or use a related skill (at a handicapped level).
If a task is hazardous, it should be declared as such. Hazardous tasks have a higher risk of mishap when unsuccessful.
If a hasty attempt is desired, make task harder (at least ROUTINE, perhaps even IMPOSSIBLE); double DMs before subtracting from time roll (hasty attempt takes less time).

Time... Task is assumed to take an average of ten UTP time periods.
The actual time duration of the task attempt (successful or not) is:
TIME x (3D - DMs) (absolute minimum is 3 time periods)
E.g., a roll of 14 (with a DM of 4 subtracted from the roll) would give a modified roll of 10. For a UTP time period of 15 min., the duration would be 150 minutes (2.5 hours). The absolute minimum would be 45 minutes.
NOTES: **If time is omitted** from the UTP, the task is assumed to be instant.

UTP Procedure Summary

when attempt fails → when mishap →

Die	*Difficulty*	*Failure*	*Mishap*
2	Automatic Failure	reroll	reroll
3+	SIMPLE	retry	SUPERFICIAL (1D)
7+	ROUTINE	check determination	MINOR (2D)
11+	DIFFICULT	Mishap (2D)	MAJOR (3D)
15+	FORMIDABLE	Mishap (3D)	DESTROYED (4D)

Failed Task Attempts...
Ordinary Task: roll 2D on the FAILURE table, above.
Hazardous Task: roll 3D on the FAILURE table, above.
Failure table results:
Retry: failed task, but can retry with no penalty.
Check determination: failed task, and must stay determined to retry the task without penalty. Staying determined is a special task which has a UTP of:
DIFFICULT, end, int (end + int represents character's force of will)
- if successful at staying determined, can retry the failed task with no penalty;
- if not successful at staying determined, have two choices...
  1. retry immediately, but task difficulty increases *one* level
  2. retry task at no increase in difficulty by waiting 10 times the duration of the failed task *before* retrying.

NOTES: **a FORMIDABLE task** increased in difficulty becomes IMPOSSIBLE, i.e. failure is permanent: no more retries are possible until circumstances change enough to allow a new UTP to be defined for the task.
JOT skill provides one free retry per level of skill (represents character's resourcefulness).
Mishap (2D): failed the task, roll 2D on the MISHAP table, above. After correcting the effects of the accident, the task reverts to check determination, should a retry be desired.
Mishap (3D): as above, except roll 3D on the MISHAP table.
Mishap table Results:
SUPERFICIAL(1D): Impose superficial damage on a device or vehicle and/or 1D wounds at random.
MINOR(2D): As above, except impose minor damage and/or 2D wounds.
MAJOR(3D): As above, except impose major damage and/or 3D wounds.
DESTROYED(4D): As above, except destroyed damage and/or 4D wounds.

Damage and Repair

Damage Level	*Operate?*	*Repair Task (shop)*	*Repair Cost (shop)*
SUPERFICIAL	Yes	SIMPLE	1D% of new price
MINOR	No	ROUTINE	1Dx1D% of new price
MAJOR	No	DIFFICULT	2Dx 5% of new price
DESTROYED	No	FORMIDABLE	2Dx 2Dx 5% of new price

To perform repairs: diagnose the problem—the standard diagnosis difficulty is ROUTINE; the referee must determine DMs & time. Once the diagnosis has succeeded (required to proceed with repairs), perform the repair task using the difficulty as indicated, above. Optionally, when in the shop, repairs can be made without successful diagnosis at an additional cost multiplier of 1D (just replace the entire assembly if you don't know what's wrong).
NOTES: **For repairs in the field** (away from shop facilities of an adequate TL) increase the task difficulty *one* level. **Lack of tools,** increase difficulty *one* level; **Lack of spare parts,** increase difficulty *one* level.
Any task involving a vehicle or device with MAJOR damage that was repaired in the field is *hazardous* (high risk of accidental breakdown). This lasts until the original MAJOR damage is totally repaired in the shop.

Special Cases... A UTP may immediately be followed by a paragraph labeled REFEREE which lists any special conditions that apply to the task attempt.
E.g., REFEREE: This task is NON-REPEATABLE; only one attempt allowed.

The UTP system is designed to be comprehensive, but not overly complex. After using the system a while, you should find it easy to remember and use.

POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE

"Excuse me, Dr. Krenstein."

"Yes, Aybee?"

"I don't mean to interrupt you—"

"That's all right, Aybee. What do you think of the view?"

"It's beautiful, sir, but—"

"We've traveled more than seventy-six parsecs from Rhylanor, Aybee, and we still have a long way to go."

"Yes, sir, we're seventy-two parsecs from Capital—"

"We're more than half-way, then. I hope you're ready to meet the Emperor."

"Why, no, sir, I thought—"

"Don't worry, Aybee. You'll remain our little secret. I doubt we'll meet Strephon face to face. The knighthood ceremony on Capital is really a formality. It probably won't be as nice as the one we had on Deneb."

"That's fine, sir, I just—"

"Say, Aybee, where is everybody anyway? This viewport won't face Gishuli forever. I'm surprised Dur isn't up here enjoying it."

"He's in his stateroom, Doctor, changing his clothes."

"Changing? Whatever for?"

"I've been trying to tell you, Doctor, that—"

"Hey, Doc, why aren't you changed yet? Don't you care about impressing the visiting royalty?" Dur Telemon, ex-scout, strode up the stairs in his dress uniform.

"Royalty? What do you mean? Why didn't you tell me about this, Aybee?"

"Doctor, I've been trying, but you keep—"

"Dur, that's really some getup. Maybe I should have joined the service after all. This is the best I could manage on such short notice." Akidda Laagiir, noted journalist, strolled into the starship's lounge, dressed in a suit of dazzling white veshlar fabric.

Krenstein gaped at the finery of his two friends. "Will somebody please explain what's going on here?" he asked.

Dur looked back at him. "Didn't Aybee tell you?"

"Why, no," Krenstein answered. The three humans looked at the robot.

Aybee hesitated, looking from one face to another, and finally spoke.

"Doctor, I tapped into the ship's library computer to see who else was on board"—he hesitated again—"and I discovered that we're not the only nobles here. Since there are two other nobles"—another pause—"I thought you might want to look your best. I've laid out your clothes in your stateroom."

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"I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET..."

The adventure begins in the Starlight Lounge aboard the Gold of Zurrian, a Tukera Lines 1000-ton long-liner. Moments after the opening conversation, other passengers start filtering into the lounge—if this scene is choreographed properly, Krenstein never will get a chance to change his clothes. The plasteel windows of the lounge provide a magnificent view of Gishuli's solar system, and this gives everyone entering an initial topic for conversation and smalltalk. Most passengers on a long-liner try to get to know one another, as they will be spending an entire week in close quarters together.

In refereeing this part of the adventure, make your players role-play. Don't just tell them things: the players (and their characters) should hold the conversations with you, just as the characters would if the conversations were actually taking place.

Arda Le and Melissa Diimish are the first two to come into the lounge. Arda introduces Melissa and himself to the characters. He is a retired Tukera Lines executive, and Melissa, a movie actress, is his travelling companion. He has been all over this area, and he is genuinely interested in the others' travel plans. He can tell them about many interesting worlds in this area (use "Library Data for the Sector").

Melissa listens more than she talks, but the party can draw her out if they try. She will explain that the party has probably never seen any of her movies; they were holographed and distributed in Corridor, but her parts were small, and none of the movies was popular offworld from their production site.

The Vargr, Onggzou, comes in next, and he immediately attracts attention because of his garish costume and dignified bearing. Remember that Onggzou has liaison-4. He is charming, cultured, sophisticated, and makes others feel at home in his company. He would rather talk about them than about himself.

As a referee, you will have succeeded if your players complain that Onggzou "couldn't possibly be a Vargr—he doesn't act like one". If he is asked questions about his outfit, he will answer them, but he will not go into as much detail as the players would probably like. He will explain that his clothing signifies that he is "a Dhaer, a minor position with the Church of the Chosen Ones." He will avoid going into much detail about the Church or its beliefs at this initial meeting.

The Marquis and Marchioness of Gemid then enter the room. They do not naturally attract attention, but they will try nevertheless, pausing on the threshhold for dramatic effect. Entering the room, the Marquis will show interest in what he calls "the four knights". He has the knack of being jovial and condescending at the same time.

The Marchioness is quiet, and speaks only when her husband asks her a question. Once she gets started, though, it can be hard to stop her. Both of them are more than happy to tell about Gemid and its high-tech delights, as well as the other worlds in the "Gemidian Marquisate". They will also boast about their travels in the Vland region. They are on their way to a shooting contest, where the Marchioness hopes to win another trophy for her skill with the laser pistol.

Captain Gemashmim Udan then strides into the Lounge. As Captain of the ship, he wants to greet the high passengers and welcome them aboard. He is particularly concerned that this trip has six different nobles on board, and he wants to insure that they all have a pleasant trip while under his care. His duties on the bridge need almost constant attention at this stage of the flight, so after meeting the passengers, he turns to leave.

As he is leaving, Terra Porphyry enters the Lounge. The Captain pauses to greet her, and then continues down the stairs. This gives those in the lounge an

opportunity to see her a moment before she sees them. Krenstein recognizes her immediately, although he has not seen her in person for more than 40 years. If he mentions her name, Akidda and Dur will both know who she is, since Dur was mentioned in her book (along with Krenstein) and Akidda was quoted. Aybee's knowledge of popular literature (and Krenstein's early personal life) is not widespread enough to include Terra Porphyry.

Remember, when playing this part out, that Terra Porphyry takes particular pleasure in creating a scene. She is brash, and doesn't mind insulting someone directly in order to get a reaction. Nor does she feel a need to stick to one topic or one victim. As well as giving her more personality, it can make your refereeing simpler if you feel free to move her suddenly from one conversation to another.

As she glances around the room, she shows surprise when she sees Krenstein, but she then rushes over to him, greeting him warmly by his first name. She then apologizes, correcting her greeting to call him "Sir Theodor". Her research in Deneb has told her who Krenstein's travelling companions are, and she greets each of them by name also. She mentions to the group that they are all in her new book on the nobles of the Imperium.

Her attention quickly turns to Arda and Melissa; Arda has been trying to escape her notice. She asks Arda where he found Melissa. Of course, Terra doesn't know Melissa's name, but she can be insulting just the same. She tells Melissa that there is no point in chasing after Arda for his money, because he doesn't have any. Arda is upset by this, and Melissa is confused about why she should suddenly be singled out by a stranger (Melissa knows who Terra Porphyry is, but doesn't know her by sight).

Arda and Melissa leave at Terra's provocation, and as they are going out, Terra calls out, "You might ask him sometime exactly why Tukera Lines fired him!"

Not one to leave well enough alone, Terra Porphyry shifts her conversation to include the Marquis and Marchioness of Gemid. The pair are initially polite to her, and they introduce themselves in their typically grand manner. Terra is immediately amused. "So you're the Marquis and Marchioness! Why, I've been dying to meet you..." Pleasantries will not be exchanged for long before Terra tells the Marchioness, "Enjoy your privileges while you can—they won't last much longer, once my book comes out." The Marchioness suddenly feels "tired", and the Marquis escorts her back to their staterooms.

Terra hasn't cleared the room yet, so she continues to introduce herself. She recognizes Onggzou's importance with the Church of the Chosen Ones by his clothing, and she mentions to him that she wrote a book about the Church. Onggzou is gracious to her, despite knowing who she is. Her biting style is no match for his Liaison-4 skill. She tries to draw him out, but he remains polite, even saying that he looks forward to speaking to her about her book later on.

Disappointed that she can not raise this Vargr's hackles, and satisfied that she has made at least three new enemies on this trip, she excuses herself and goes back to her stateroom.

The four adventurers and Onggzou are the only ones left in the Lounge at this time.

A QUIET DINNER

When the characters are ready for dinner, they can eat in their rooms or in the Starlight Lounge. If they choose to eat in their rooms, the steward will bring them their selections. If they go to the lounge, the steward will have set up several tables. The first table holds Arda and Melissa, the second holds Onggzou, the Marquis, and the Marchioness, and the third table is empty. There is enough room at any of the tables to include the other four characters. If anyone asks, Terra Porphyry is eating dinner in her room.

During dinner, wherever the characters choose to eat, the steward brings a private message to Aybee. It says,

Dear Sir Owen, I would appreciate it if you would please come to my room as soon as you could. I would like to talk with you for a few minutes about Theodor, just for old times' sake. I would also appreciate it if you would not mention this to him.—Terra Porphyry, Cabin 9.

THE VISIT

Presumably, Aybee will share this note with Dr. Krenstein, and the two of them will decide whether Aybee should go. We found in playtesting this adventure that the players were very hesitant to send Aybee in by himself. To counter this, call on the characters' curiosity and trusting natures. If necessary, Dr. Krenstein can accompany Aybee without spoiling the adventure.

When Aybee gets to Terra's room, she will let him in, then pause for a few moments looking at him before speaking.

"I never thought that Theodor would go that far," she says. "To think of him, actually knighting a robot." She doesn't care how Aybee reacts, just as long as he does react somehow; she is just fishing for a good quotation for her book. She has kept up on Krenstein's academic career, of course, and his knighthood is mentioned in her forthcoming book. Research she did in the Spinward Marches revealed to her that Aybee's birth records were forged, and putting two and two together, she has deduced that he is a robot.

The discussion of Krenstein "for old times' sake" was a ruse she used to get Aybee to her stateroom. When Aybee leaves, she locks her door behind him and spends the evening alone in her room. She will not answer the door to callers.

JUMPSPACE AND JUMP DIMMING

It takes the ship about eight hours to get far enough from Gishuli's gravity well for the ship to safely jump. If any of the characters go to the Lounge to wait for the jump, they will encounter Melissa there. If Akidda or Dur is there, she will flirt with them.

The transitions to and from jumpspace are momentous occasions during an interstellar trip. Following an old Vilani superstition, the pilot of a ship customarily dims the ship's interior and exterior lights before going into jump. Historically, this custom derived from the need for all of the ship's power to be diverted into the computer and electronic systems, so that the tremendous power produced by the jump drive could be guided into creating the jump field properly. Zhodani and Solomani pilots do not follow this tradition of "jump dimming".

The lights on the long-liner are dimmed for a period of about two minutes; the lights are brought back up to full as soon as the ship is in jumpspace. Holographic entertainment is provided on the plasteel windows of the Starlight Lounge; otherwise, the windows show only the dull gray of jumpspace.

ACCUSED!

The next morning, Aybee answers his stateroom door to find Captain Udan, the Marquis, and the chief steward. They ask if they can come in, and then ask him what he and Terra Porphyry talked about yesterday at dinnertime.

Aybee will not be able to tell the truth about this, and in any case, the Captain will inform him that he is under house arrest for the murder of Terra Porphyry. She was found dead in her stateroom this morning. As the crime was committed in Imperial space, Imperial law applies, and the Marquis, as the ranking noble on board, has taken over the investigation. It is his decision that Aybee be confined to his stateroom for the duration of the voyage, until he can be turned over to the local authorities on Iren for prosecution.

If Krenstein accompanied Aybee to Terra's room, he will also be placed under arrest, and the following discussion applies equally to him.

Aybee can still communicate with the others room to room, or they can come to see him in his stateroom, but he is not allowed to leave. The first goal of the characters should be to find out as much as they can about the murder.

Terra Porphyry was killed by three laser blasts, all within two centimeters of each other, clustered around the heart. She was seated at her desk at the time. The steward estimates the time of death as within an hour of the time Aybee entered her stateroom.

It is known that no one went into her cabin after Aybee did, because security cameras (tied in with the ship's anti-hijacking computer program) discreetly record movement about the ship's passageways. Most passengers do not realize that this is done; it is unobtrusive and is meant only to insure their safety. The cameras are two-dimensional and fixed-focus. They do not record sound, nor do they record actions within staterooms, as this would infringe on the privacy of passengers.

Terra Porphyry's room is still as it was found; the steward intends to move her body to a low berth soon.

HOW IMPERIAL LAW APPLIES TO THIS CASE

Imperial law is the law of exceptions. Each world in the Imperium has its own government and laws, which residents of that world obey. Imperial law governs the space between worlds; it also protects Imperial citizens to provide a basic minimum of law level in its area of the galaxy. Imperial law is invoked only as a last resort. Nobles in particular feel that the enforcement of Imperial law is their responsibility, although it is not necessarily their duty.

PROVING AYBEE'S INNOCENCE

The goal of the characters is now to prove Aybee's innocence. The best way to do this is to find the real killer. It is particularly important that it not be discovered that Aybee is a robot, with a laser built into his right arm.

MOTIVES

All of the player characters and all of the NPCs described in detail have motives for killing Terra Porphyry, and many of them had access to a laser weapon. A first step for the characters might be to discover who had motive and opportunity. This section contains a synopsis of this for each character, but don't just spoonfeed this to your players. This is information they will piece together by talking with fellow passengers and following other clues.

Aybee might have desired to kill Terra in order to protect Dr. Krenstein by concealing Aybee's true nature. Aybee had the perfect opportunity. He was in Terra's room with his built-in laser welder. Although this seems like an extreme act, it is possible that Aybee's programming malfunctioned, and he did kill her.

If Aybee actually played back his own holographic recording of his conversation for the other characters shortly after it occurred, they know his innocence. If he waits more than 10 minutes, he has only two-dimensional images of the scene in his memory.

Dur might have killed Terra as revenge for her description of his part in the Pannet incident, written up in her book on the Scout Service. He does not normally have access to a laser, but he might have used Krenstein's.

Krenstein also appeared in Terra's first book. He is skilled with the laser rifle, and has his in his stateroom. Typically, baggage is not further inspected if it has cleared customs, and special allowances are made for nobles (particularly those with Imperial space-required vouchers).

Akidda has always felt that he was misquoted by Terra in her book on the Scouts. His career was not, however, directly touched by this, so he has a weaker motive than the others. He has no skill with any laser weapon.

Onggzou might have killed her to avenge what she wrote about the Church of the Chosen Ones. His preferred weapon is the auto pistol, and he had no access to a laser on board.

Arda might have killed Terra to collect her inheritance, which was sizable because of her best-selling books. There is a question, raised by Terra in the lounge, as to whether he has anything left from his retirement pension. He has no skill with a laser, nor did he have access to one on board.

The Marquis and Marchioness of Gemid might have felt sufficiently threatened by Terra's forthcoming book on nobles that they decided to kill Terra before it could be published. The Marchioness in particular is skilled with the laser pistol, and she has three sport weapons with her in her cabin. If they did kill her to stop her new book, it is puzzling why they did not destroy Terra's holocrystal recorder at the same time.

Captain Udan's career in the Scouts was hurt by the false accusations in Terra's book. He might have killed her for revenge. At the present time, however, he has a successful captaincy, and it would be foolish for him to risk his present good fortune for the sake of a grudge.

The captain became expert with the laser rifle while serving in the Scouts; he keeps his weapon in his cabin. He also would have access to security information: he could have gotten into Terra's room even though it was locked, and he alone could manipulate the security camera records to hide his involvement at any time. The crew knows he was on the bridge during the jump dimming.

Melissa might have killed Terra so that Arda would collect the inheritance, if it is true that Melissa was only after Arda's money. Since she was seen by some of the characters in the Starlight Lounge during the jump dimming, it would have been impossible for her to have murdered Terra at that time. She had no training in laser weapons in her career as an actress.

Terra Porphyry could not have committed suicide.

CLUES FROM GENERAL SOURCES

The only way that the characters will be able to save Aybee is if they take an active part in the investigation. The most obvious way to do this is by virtue of their own nobility. The Marquis doesn't really want to get involved in the investigation, and if prevailed upon, he will "deputize" the others to assist him. He will then do his best to ignore them, letting them do all the work.

The players should also try to release Aybee from his house arrest. This prevents Aybee's player from being pushed into the background. As soon as any doubt has been cast upon Aybee's guilt, the characters should prevail upon the Marquis or Captain Udan to free him, at least until reaching Iren. The suggestion to free Aybee can also come from the Captain; in that case, make the other players argue with the Marquis before he relents.

The principal clue to the identity of the murderer, and the one that points most strongly at Aybee, is the recording of the security camera in the passageway outside Terra's stateroom. If the players wish to see it, the steward can arrange to display it on a terminal. When replaying the recording, the characters can fast forward, fast rewind, or move directly to any time. The time of the recording is superimposed on the lower left portion of the picture.

The recording clearly shows that Aybee was the last one to see Terra Porphyry alive. The characters' review will also show that the recording goes dark during the jump dimming. If they ask about this, the steward will explain that the picture is not dark; it is just difficult to see because there is no movement.

To demonstrate this, he will show another passageway on the middle deck at the same time period. To his surprise, this image is much brighter. Checking other areas of the ship shows the same thing: only the hallway outside Terra's room does not appear on the recording during the two minutes of jump dimming.

The easiest way to investigate the cause of this is to recreate the scene. If the passageway lights are dimmed from controls on the bridge, the characters will find that the lights go completely out in the central passageway (between Room 10 and Room 16 on Deck B).

Further investigation by a ship engineer will reveal that the passageway wiring was tampered with to cause the blackout. Such sabotage would take only a minute or two with the proper tools (Krenstein could easily do it with his electronic tool kit). Since the sabotage does not appear on the security recording, it presumably took place in port sometime during the previous week. (Security cameras are not normally used while the ship is unfueled and without passengers in the spaceport dock.)

This discovery weakens the case against Aybee; almost anyone on Deck B had the opportunity to commit the murder while the lights were out. All of the NPCs were in their rooms at jump time except for Melissa, who was in the Starlight Lounge.

If the murder was committed during jump dimming, the killer needed to get into Terra's room. Investigation will reveal that Terra's door lock does not work properly. Staterooms are normally unlocked by a voice recognition circuit keyed to the occupant's voice. Alternatively, one can enter a six-digit code using a numeric pad on the door. This allows two or more people to "share" a stateroom, although Tukera Lines requires that each passenger has his own room. In the case of Terra's door, pressing any single digit on the keypad unlocks the door. This was also caused by sabotage to ship's wiring.

Further, when the lights in the hall blacked out, the lights in Terra's room also blacked out, from a similar cause. Other staterooms in the area were not affected.

Laser weapons must have plenty of energy if they are to penetrate effectively: for this a portable power pack worn on the back or around the waist is normally used. A clue easily overlooked is that even if Aybee was seen going into Terra's room, he did not have any such equipment with him.

The characters may decide to hunt for the murder weapon. A room-to-room inquiry will reveal that no weapons are missing. The actual murder weapon (see "Special Equipment") was thrown into the disposal in one of the rooms.

The characters will be able to find the murder weapon in the trash compactor (behind the access panel across from Room 26 on Deck C) on a UTP of:

To find the murder weapon in the trash compactor:
FORMIDABLE, int+edu, 20 min.

The characters may also find a small disposable flashlight, small enough to hold in the palm of one's hand. There are no fingerprints on either item, even if the characters did have the necessary equipment to reveal such prints.

Another potential clue is Terra's holocrystal recorder, which she was using to write her book on nobles of the Imperium. It is similar in design to Akidda's, and it was running when Aybee paid her a visit. Unfortunately, that meeting and all of her notes for the book are encoded. A typical code would use some personal identification characteristic as a key, such as a person's voice or retinal patterns. Because of Terra's death, it is now effectively impossible to read any of the holocrystals she had in her possession. In the long run, this may be more beneficial to the characters than otherwise.

The characters should be discouraged from making a room-to-room search of the high passage deck. High passengers expect their privacy to be respected during a trip. The Marquis, if he is still in charge of the investigation, will not allow such a search. The Captain will try to postpone any such search until the vessel docks at Iren. However, if your players can pose convincing arguments as to why a formal search is needed immediately, you can allow them to make a search.

If a search is conducted, no weapons other than those described above will be found. In Terra Porphyry's room, the characters will find a jeweled dagger and equipment to forge identification papers, together with some forged ID. It is probable that she used these materials while researching her book.

Onggzou will not appreciate having his room searched, and he will lodge a formal complaint with Captain Udan. The characters may also discover that Melissa has a peculiar fondness for clothes: she has two identical sets of most of her clothing. If the characters do not plan and conduct the search in secret, the murderer will have enough time to prepare, and will not be revealed.

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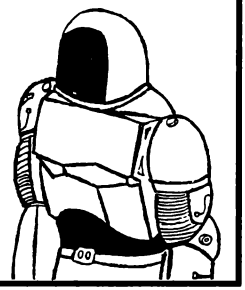


OFF THE HOOK

To bring this adventure to a successful conclusion requires that suspicion be diverted away from Aybee and the other three characters.

One way to free Aybee from certain "death" at the hands of officials on Iren is to hijack the ship. Onggzou will suggest this course to Krenstein if Krenstein reacts positively to Onggzou's conversations about the Church. Onggzou's motive is "simply to see justice done". He would explain that, once the ship was in Krenstein's control, Aybee's rights would be protected, and the ship would be returned to Tukera control as soon as possible.

In point of fact, Onggzou would like to hijack the ship for other reasons. The most obvious is the value of the long-liner itself. But more importantly, Onggzou wants to kidnap the Marquis and Marchioness. This would help him and his corsairs in taking over Daama; with any luck, the Church would soon be able to muster a strategic position strong enough to enable them to overrun Gemid itself.

Once Onggzou was in control, he would try to dispose of the other passengers. This is a complicated alternative to play out, but if your players would enjoy a hijacking, and the challenge of dealing with the Vargr's double-cross, by all means have him suggest the hijacking to them.

A simpler way is to find another, more reasonable suspect. The authorities on Iren, if given only one suspect, would convict him. But given a choice of two equally likely murderers, their politics and bureaucracy would likely free both soon. Ideally, only the actual murderer would be turned over to officials on Iren.

If another passenger should be killed, this person would find it difficult to defend himself. Casting suspicion on this person would close the case.

The characters will fare better with the officials on Iren if they are in charge of the investigation, rather than the "Marquis" of Gemid, who is unlikely to exert himself to protect Aybee's rights, even if doubt has been cast on Aybee's guilt.

Finally, if the players are in charge of the investigation, they can turn Aybee over to the Imperial Naval authorities at Iren, rather than to the local officials. The extent of motives and opportunities that others had to commit this murder, as well as Aybee's meritorious actions which resulted in his knighthood, would favor his release after a short investigation.

THE PLOT

To make a long story short, Arda is in way over his head in gambling debts. Criminal elements have decided that the only way to collect is for Arda to come into a lot of money. The best way for this to happen, they reason, is for his wife, Terra Porphyry, to die before the mismatched couple's divorce is finalized.

To insure that Terra dies, the criminals hired a professional killer. She has travelled with Arda for six months, and is on this long-liner by foreknowledge of Terra's travel plans. She also arranged that the ship be sabotaged in certain ways. She boarded with her custom-made laser pistol. An hour or two later, while the ship is still in port, her identical twin boards, wearing identical clothes.

The murderer can thus be two places at once and have the perfect alibi. She enters Terra's room as soon as it is dark, before Terra has a chance to react. The stowaway is not likely to be discovered, since anyone who sees her believes he knows her, and the twins are careful not to be seen together.

The murderer's actual stats are thus:

(Other) 8A8C64 Age 39 5 terms Cr 25,000 Born: 206-1062
Laser Pistol-3, Forgery-2, Brawling-1, Bribery-1, Mechanical-1, Electronic-1
Possessions: Integral Laser Pistol

DECK A

Except for the StarLight lounge, Deck A is mostly fuel storage. Turrets B and C are unarmed hard points in most examples of this vessel.

1. StarLight Lounge: The StarLight lounge is one of the features of the ship; it is restricted to high passengers only. The walls are made of clear plasteel, and curve in a semi-circle to join the ceiling. Movable tables may be spotted around the room. A well-stocked autobar covers the forward bulkhead.

DECK B

Contains the bridge, command crew's quarters, and high passenger cabins. The cabins and appointments are better than on the other decks, and the proximity to the StarLight lounge is considered desirable.

2. Bridge: On the bridge are positions for the pilot; co-pilot; engineering monitor; security, defense, and damage control; computer main terminal; and navigator. The large round item is the course-plotting computer holographic display. This display is used to show 3-D navigation information. The arrangement of pilot and co-pilot with the pilot on the right follows Vilani tradition; Solomani tradition places the pilot on the left.

3. Computer: This cabin contains the main memory of the computer, several emergency backup circuits, and a supply of spare parts. The memory of about 1 trillion words (2.5 million volumes, which includes digitized holo-recordings, text, programs, and a comprehensive index) consists of ultra-high speed holocrystals, all online. The master computer console is located on the bridge.

4. Navigator Cabin: Each crew stateroom is essentially similar to a passenger stateroom (see room number 9).

5. Chief Engineer Cabin: (similiar to stateroom 9).

6. Captain Cabin: (similiar to stateroom 9).

7. Chief Steward (Purser) Cabin: (similiar to stateroom 9).

8. Annex Lounge: This lounge is open to high and mid passengers. It is not as well appointed as the Starlight Lounge, but it does have an extra library data terminal for use by passengers. Because of traffic through this area, the Annex does not provide much in the way of quiet relaxation.

9. Garnett Room (Passenger Stateroom): This stateroom is named for the naval architect who designed the Pride of Vland class long liner for Tukera Lines. Standard passenger comfort demands a certain level of amenity in the stateroom.

In order to meet this standard, staterooms are self-contained living areas which need never be left during a voyage. The stateroom contains a bed, a fresher, entertainment consoles, and miscellaneous furniture.

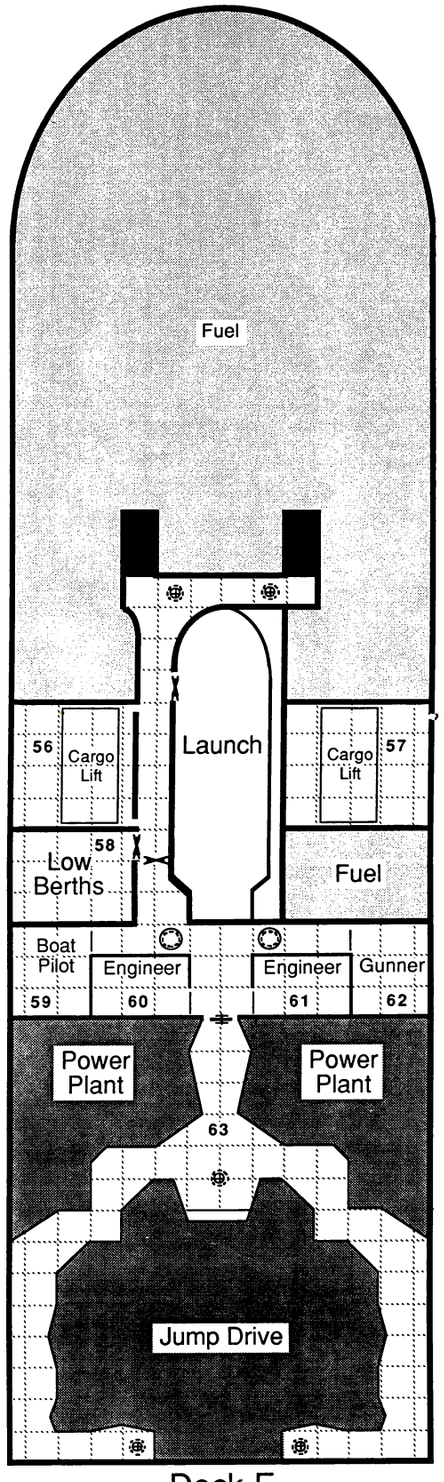
All basic items in the stateroom collapse into the floor, wall, or ceiling when not in use.

Functions supported by the stateroom can be divided into five basic categories: sleeping, eating, sanitary necessities, leisure, and possession storage.

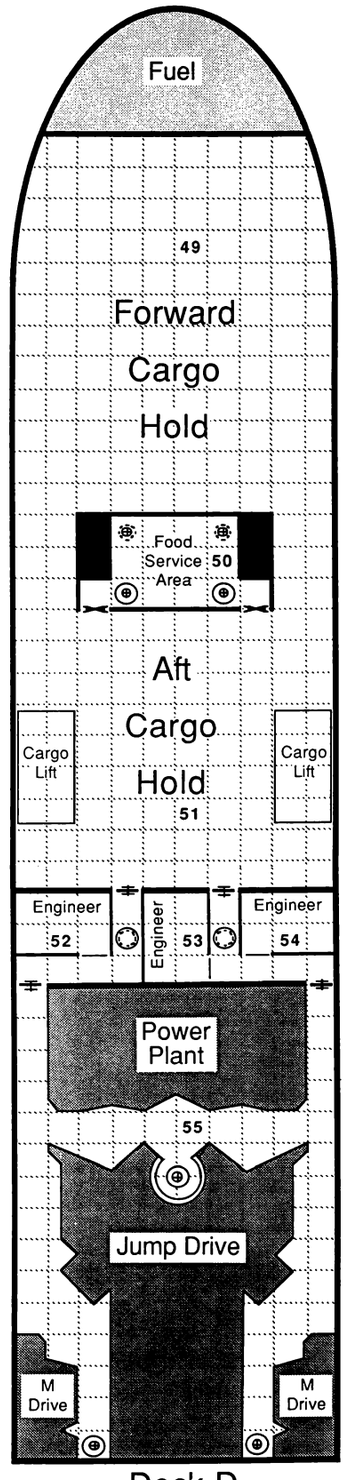
Sleeping is supported by the standard size bed which folds from the wall at command. Grav plates can be adjusted to provide a range from 0.0 to 1.5G for personal comfort.

Meals may be taken on a collapsible table and storable chair. The stateroom is large enough for four persons to eat around the table comfortably. Meals themselves must be delivered from the passenger lounge; there is no automated delivery sytem. A small refrigerator stores snacks and small quantities of food for immediate availability.

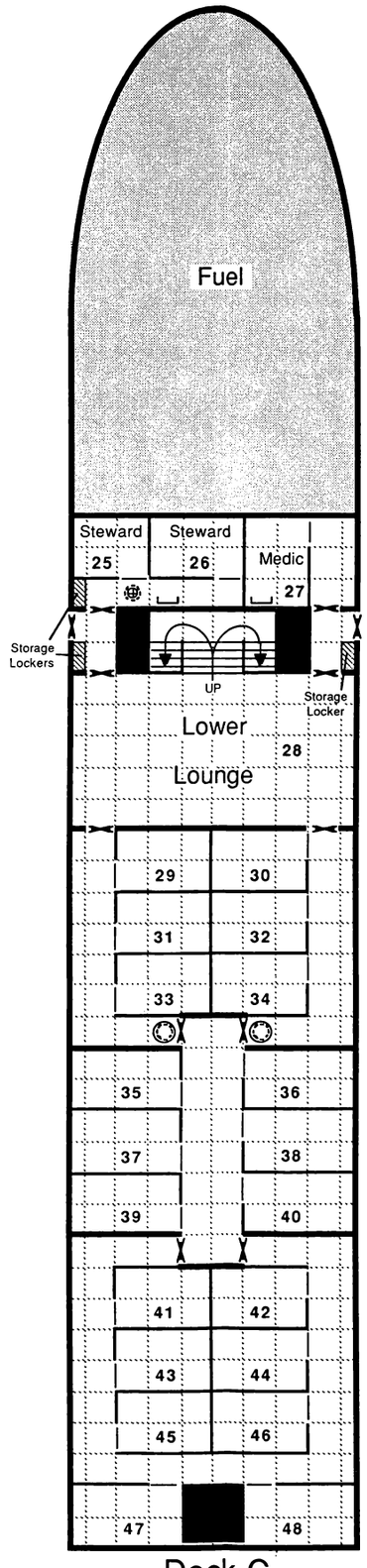
—continued on page 32



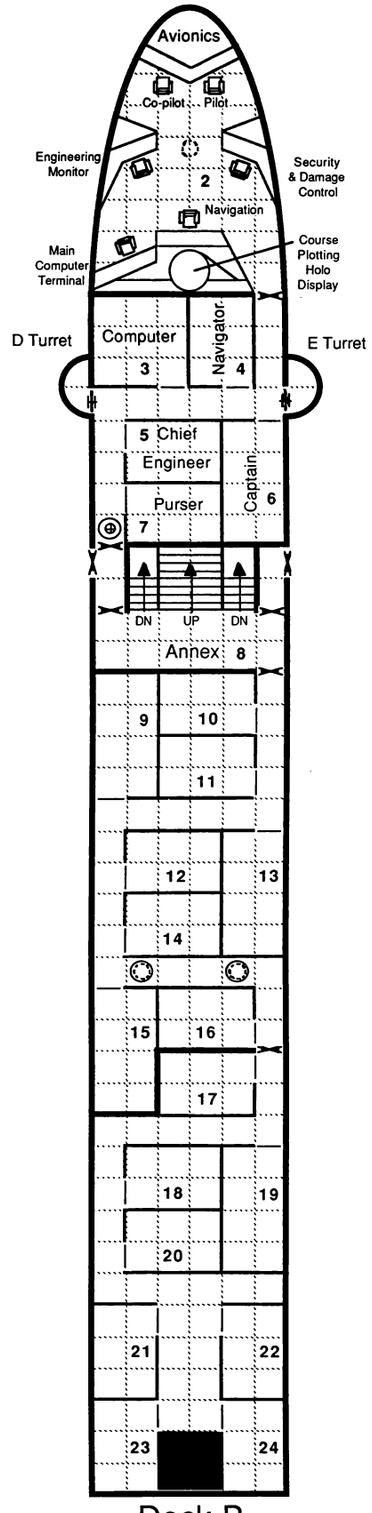
Deck E



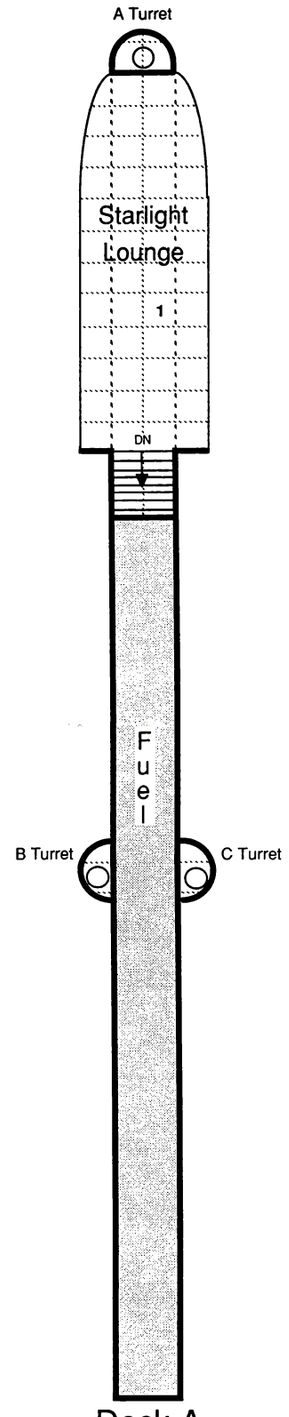
Deck D



Deck C



Deck B



Deck A

1.5 meter squares for use with Snapshot or Azhanti High Lightning

Deck Plan Symbols

- Interior Wall
- Sliding Door
- Bulkhead
- Lift Shaft

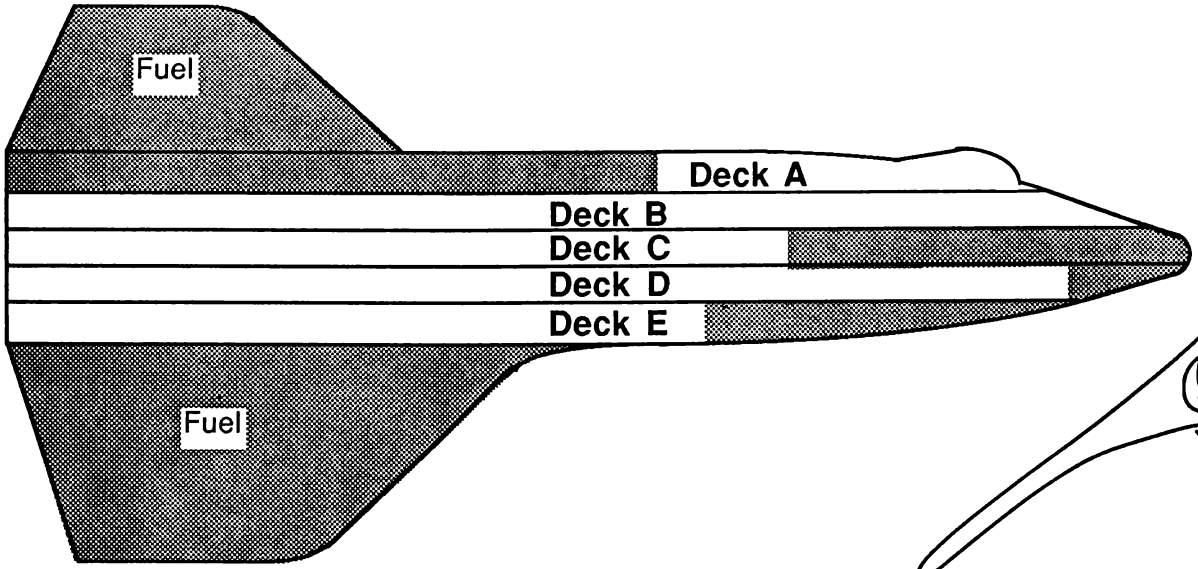
MANUAL HATCH

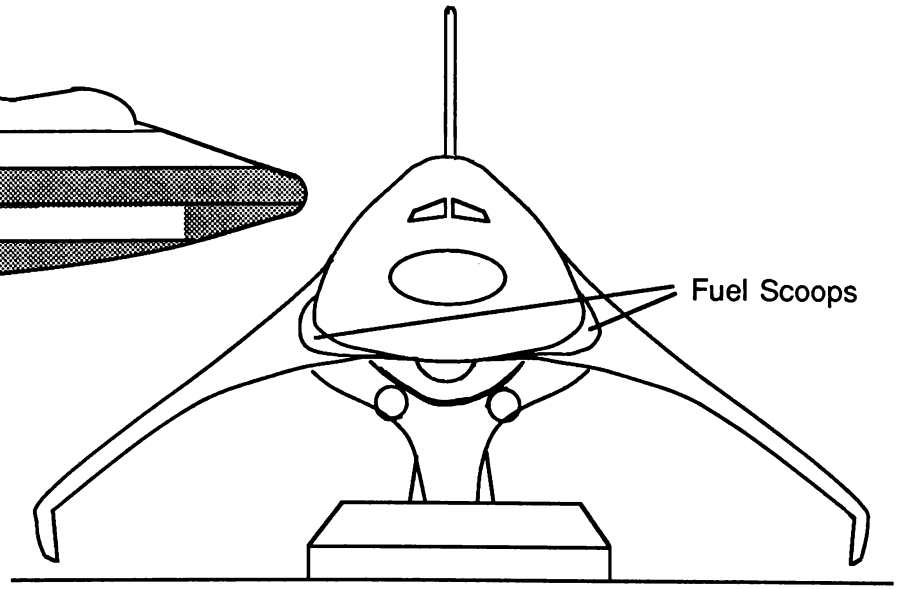
- Manual Hatch
- Overhead
- Floor
- Both Floor and Overhead

IRIS VALVE

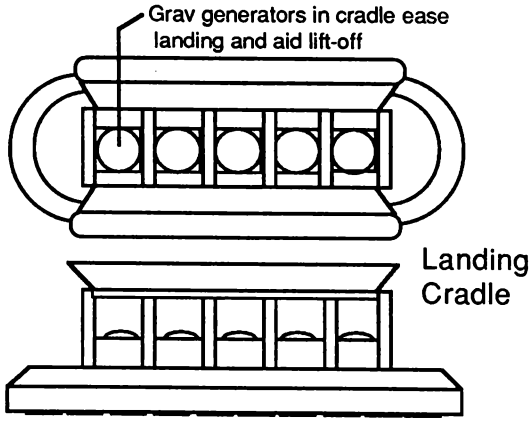
- Iris Valve
- Overhead
- Floor
- Both Floor and Overhead

Gold of Zurrian

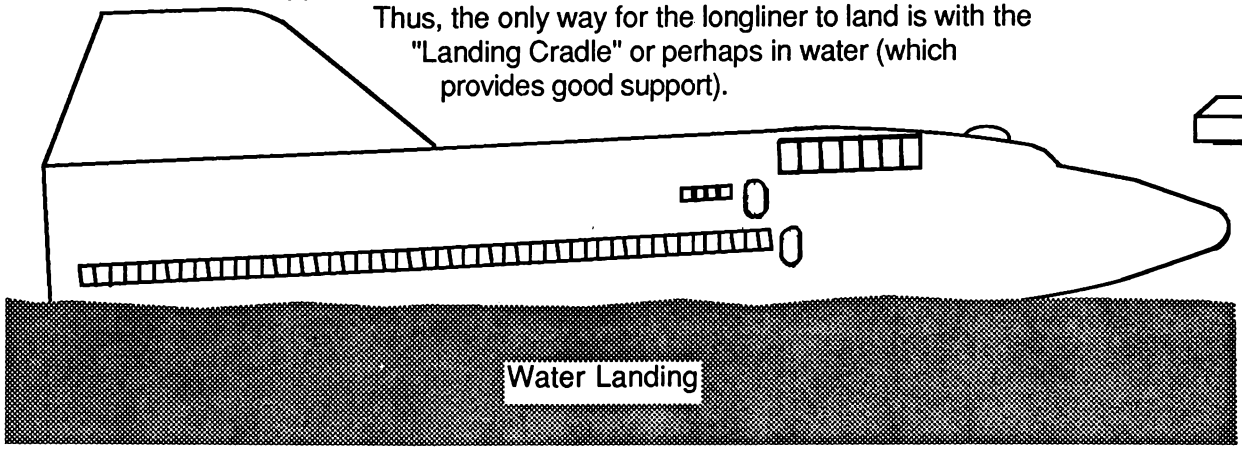




The greatest difficulty in landing a large ship on a world's surface is providing adequate support. Large ships designed for frequent surface landings have massive hull members to absorb the stress. The Tukera longliner design shown here was not designed for frequent surface landings, allowing more room for cargo and passenger comfort. The major structural member of this design is its outer hull, which is sufficient for normal orbit-to-orbit operations. The hull will not support the transverse stress imposed by landing gear. Thus, the only way for the longliner to land is with the "Landing Cradle" or perhaps in water (which provides good support).



The Cradle moves around the starport under grav power.



continued from page 23—

Sanitary necessities are handled by the fresher, which includes a multi-function shower, a toilet, a sink, and a small washer/dryer (for the benefit of middle passengers). All components fold unobtrusively out of the way when not in use.

Leisure activities are a necessary part of stateroom life. They relieve the boredom of the long jump voyage by providing entertainment, research facilities, and computer access. The wide range of entertainment activities includes holographic theatrical productions, video shows, interactive drama, and audio programming.

There are also games (played against the main computer, or against other passengers). The computer terminal also allows access (on a restricted basis) to the main computer for data processing, word processing, and library data inquiries.

Storage of personal necessities is handled by several collapsible compartments and cabinets. Passengers can store up to 100 kilograms of baggage in their staterooms; high passengers may store an additional 900 kilograms in the cargo compartment (access to any needed items requires the assistance of the crew).

10 through 24. Passenger Stateroom: see room 9 for a detailed stateroom description.

DECK C

Middle passengers are berthed on this deck.

25 and 26. Steward Cabin: (similiar to stateroom 9).

27. Medic Cabin: (similiar to stateroom 9).

28. Lower Lounge: used as the dining area for this deck, and for social gatherings too large for the upper lounge or the annex.

29 through 48. Passenger Stateroom: (similiar to stateroom 9).

DECK D

Engineering crew, drives and cargo deck. The critical engineering circuit junctions are arranged in a rough circle about the hatch in room 55, for easy access from the engineering panel on E deck.

49. Forward Hold:

50. Food Service Area:

51. Aft Hold:

52 through 54. Engineer Cabin: (similiar to stateroom 9).

55. Upper Drive Room:

DECK E

The main engineering panel is on this deck, as is the bulk of the jump drive. Also note the cargo loading hatches connected to the cargo lifts. The space under the lifts (which are carried in the upper position) is loaded last.

56. Port Cargo Lift: (gravitic cargo lift).

57. Starboard Cargo Lift: (gravitiv cargo lift).

58. Low Berths:

59. Boat Pilot Cabin: (similiar to stateroom 9).

60 and 61. Engineer Cabin: (similiar to stateroom 9).

62. Gunner Cabin:

63. Lower Drive Room:

CLUES FROM LIBRARY DATA

An important information source is the ship's library data. Make the players work a little to get this library data. Using keywords is the best, since entries indexed on important keywords are instantly available. For example, "Church of the Chosen Ones" is a main entry and can be immediately referenced. Having accessed the Church data, a secondary keyword of "Onggzou" can be used to get more information on his position within the Church, without having to read everything that the library contains. This cross-reference is also immediate.

Asking for all references to "Onggzou" or "Captain Udan" and so on takes about 8 hours, because of the volume of the material the computer must read. Up to 2D such requests can be made at a time.

If the players complain about the slow rate of a full reference search, explain that a typical Model/4 computer can store 1 trillion words online and that the Tech Level 15 search rate averages 50 million words a second (by contrast, the Tech Level 7.5 search rate averages 100,000 words a second). This is roughly equivalent to reading 120 volumes of encyclopedias from cover to cover in one second!

Iren: Iren's law level of E means its police force is paramilitary in nature; if Aybee is turned over to local authorities, it is unlikely he will be found innocent. It would be discovered he is a robot, and Krenstein would be accused of programming him to kill Terra Porphyry.

Gemid: This keyword provides only data on the world Gemid (see "Sector Library Data "). Information on the Marquis and Marchioness of Gemid, or the current status of the Marquisate is not given.

Marquis of Gemid: This reference reveals "Marquis of Gemid" as a historical title without any real authority today outside of Daama. Knowing this, the players can take the control of the investigation away from the Marquis.

Terra's Books: Terra's books are best-sellers, and they are in the library computer in their entirety. They are not indexed; references to various subjects can be only be had by seeking "all references" to a particular word.

The Church of the Chosen Ones: The computer has considerable information on the Church, since the long-liner's route is near Vargr space. There is no reference connecting the Church with the takeover of Newcastle/Anarsi. Information on the Church is found below. Don't just read the whole article to your players. Make them request specific keywords; then read appropriate sections to them.

Passengers and Crew: The computer does have some details about the passengers and crew. A UTP to access this restricted data is:

To access restricted information in a Tukera starship computer:
FORMIDABLE, computer, int, 5 min
REFEREE: Any mishap causes a security alert on the bridge

Information available includes most of Captain Udan's character description, the real explanation for Arda's dismissal from Tukera, and Terra's ticketing information, including her trip plans from Deneb to Capital, which started eight months ago. The fact that Terra planned her trip so far in advance might suggest that the murder was premeditated before this leg of her trip began.

THE CHURCH OF THE CHOSEN ONES

The Church of the Chosen Ones is a fanatical Vargr sect which believes that the Ancients not only "invented" the Vargr race by genetic manipulation of Terran carnivores, but that the Ancients also returned to the Vargr several times, improving the race to the point that it could take its rightful place as the leader of this part of the galaxy. Some Church members even believe that the Ancients will return again to bring this about. The Church has waned in influence since its founding 200 years ago, but it still has followers on many worlds.

In the Vargr language of Gvegh, the Church of the Chosen Ones is known as Ourrghfaengaeknokskugvorrgh. The leader of the Church has the formal title of "Llaetsdhithae", and each official in the next lower level of the Church hierarchy is known as a "Dhaer", or "listener".

The Church of the Chosen ones is a church only in so far as it asks a strong degree of devotion and trust from its members. It does not worship the Ancients any more than it worships the Vargr race. It does believe that it is the true leader and the only hope for the Vargr race, because Church members are the only ones who recognize the true position of the race in the destiny of the galaxy.

The "holy book" of the Church of the Chosen Ones is an Ancient artifact. The artifact is a twisted piece of multi-colored crystal, garish in its appearance, but pleasing enough to the Vargr taste. The founder of the Church claimed to have received this artifact personally from the Ancients. Only the inner council of the Church has access to the device and in fact, no other members of the Church have ever seen it. At various times, the device is functional and reveals some new insight to the sect. It is not available for public examination, of course, because it is holy to the Church. Among non-believers, there is a great deal of skepticism about this process.

How the device works has never been discovered. The Church teaches that it is in fact a two-way communication device which allows Church leaders to contact the Ancients in their present home. This belief is furthered by the fact that pronouncements from the device typically occur during Church crises.

Each pronouncement is numbered and the collection of these messages forms the holy book of the Church. Some pronouncements are seemingly without meaning, being composed only of a series of numbers or asymmetric designs. These are held in special awe by believers, some of whom speculate that the patriarchs of the Church know the meaning of these oracles.

The artifact glows faintly when a message is waiting; when a message is being received it glows so brightly that by-standers can be blinded if they look directly at it. The leader wears the artifact from a gold chain hanging around his neck. To receive a message, the leader places the device on his head, so that one end covers his left ear, and the other end covers his right eye. The Llaetsdhithae, as the Church leader is called, then hears spoken words through one ear, while he sees an apparently random pattern with the opposite eye.

The Llaetsdhithae is assisted in his duties by nineteen "listeners", so called because they listen to and obey the messages of the artifact as the Llaetsdhithae reveals them. Each listener is assigned to an administrative area ranging in size from a small city to a number of subsectors or sectors.

Each listener is responsible for all Church affairs in his area, such as

building, publishing, recruiting members, and appointing officials of the Church in his region. About one-half of the time, the Llaetsdhithae has been chosen from among the listeners.

The first message received from the artifact was "Treat me well. I am the third most valuable thing." This message has been repeated before every subsequent message.

The meaning of this message is interpreted by the Church as follows: The artifact, as a two-way communication device with the Ancients, is the third most valuable thing in this area of the galaxy. The Vargr race, because of its favored position among all sentient races, is the second most valuable thing. The most valuable thing is a matter of speculation among the Church faithful. Some say the most important thing is the Ancient race itself. Others say it is the Church of the Chosen Ones. Still others say the most important thing is something that does not exist yet that will be revealed at some future time.

The first message of the artifact, "treat me well," is taken very seriously by those assigned to its care. Before the full importance of the artifact was understood, many mysterious deaths resulted from carelessness with the artifact; these deaths encouraged the view that the artifact is a two-way device.

Is the artifact genuine? The Church believes it is, and so do many Vargr not associated with the Church. As the artifact is considered holy by the Church, it has not been exposed to careful unbiased examination by the scientific community, so there is plenty of room for opposing opinions concerning the artifact's origins. Some scientists do believe the device is an Ancient artifact, but opinion is divided over what it actually is.

Naturally, the Church is organized charismatically. The leader, known as the Llaetsdhithae, is a charismatic Vargr who demands and receives total loyalty from the Church faithful. This leader is chosen by the artifact, usually after the death of the previous leader, although in a few instances the leader was chosen before the death of the leader in power. As the leader chosen always has a high charisma, the Vargr accept him without difficulty.

The actual direction of the Church is a difficult task because the Vargr tend not to obey a leader residing at any great distance. The listeners must, in response to this, travel throughout their administrative areas. The leader of the Church avoids this by virtue of his control over the artifact.

Referee: The most recent message revealed to the Church faithful (not all of the messages are published or commented on by Church leaders) was one that simply said, "Take Newcastle." The text of this message was not revealed until recently, when the world (in Anarsi subsector) was finally conquered, although according to the Church, the message was received about two years ago.

Is the artifact genuine? Does the Vargr race deserve a special status in the galaxy? Will the Ancients return to establish the Vargr in their proper position of

leadership? Answers to these questions are not available to the characters, but we will deal with them briefly here.

The oracle device of the Church of the Chosen Ones is an Ancient artifact, but its function is not properly understood by the Church. The Ancients developed the Vargr from Terran carnivore stock not in an attempt to produce a superior race, but in an attempt to create a species of servant.

To help further the development of intelligence in the neo-Vargr race, the Ancients used three different psionic devices. One of these was discovered by the founder of the Church of the Chosen Ones.

When a Vargr places this device properly on his head, it psionically reads his thoughts. The device then articulates sounds (forms words) to clarify the Vargr's thinking. The seemingly random visual patterns are meant to stimulate the opposite hemisphere of the brain, thus enhancing the learning through the ear.

Because the device has artificial intelligence, and because it is meant to help the Vargr develop greater intellectual and socialization skills, its messages seem to support the ongoing activities of the Church. Sometimes this is coincidence. Other times the device is actually using the Church structure (which it understands from the thoughts of the Llaetsdhithae) to stimulate the development of Vargr society and culture.

About thirty years ago, the Church discovered a "mirror-image" artifact. This is the second device that the Ancients used in training the young Vargr race. By sending messages to one eye, while cross-stimulating the brain with another message to the ear, this device developed Vargr intelligence in other ways. Because the "messages" (through the ear) from this device seem to be random, the Church is at a loss to explain the device's function, and has not announced its discovery. This device, incidentally, is the "second most valuable thing".

When a Vargr had been under the influence of these two devices for a certain period of time, a third device was used to test the success of the training. This "most valuable thing" would decide whether a Vargr's genetics were sufficient to allow him continued membership in Vargr society. Vargr who failed this test were disposed of by the Ancients. Perhaps fortunately for the Church, this device has not been discovered.

The argument for Vargr racial superiority used by the Church is specious. If the motives of the Ancients were to create a new, better race, then they might have had the technical prowess to accomplish this. But the Ancients' goal in the Vargr was to create a race of perfect servants, and in this the Ancients failed; the experiment was abandoned sometime before the Final War.

THE *PRIDE OF VLAND* CLASS LONG-LINER

Long-Liner (type RT): Using a 1000-ton hull, the Tukera long-liner is a main-route passenger transport serving much of the Imperium. It mounts a jump drive-V, maneuver drive-E, and power plant-V, giving a performance of jump-4 and 1G acceleration. Fuel tankage for 440 tons supports the power plant and one jump-4. Adjacent to the bridge is a Model/4 computer.

There are 50 staterooms and 6 emergency low berths. The ship has five hardpoints and five tons allocated for fire control. Only one triple turret is usually installed; it carries a heterogeneous mix of one beam laser, one missile rack, and one sandcaster. The ship carries one vehicle: a 20-ton launch. Cargo capacity for the long-liner is 130 tons. The hull is streamlined. The ship has a fuel purification plant, and can safely use unrefined fuel.

The long-liner requires a crew of 14: captain/pilot, navigator, 6 engineers, medic, 3 stewards, gunner, and launch pilot. The ship can carry up to 24 high passengers (more if another steward is added) and 12 middle passengers. The ship costs MCr526.4 (including 10% discount for quantity production, and 1% architect's fees) and takes 30 months to build.

The Tukera long-liner is a proprietary Tukera Lines design, and is operated on many of Tukera's routes as a standard passenger liner. Built sturdily and intended to last in service for decades, the long-liner maintains a standard of quality service that other lines try to match. Tukera's long-liners are named to recall worlds it serves: *Pride of Vland, Deneb Express, Spirit of Rhylanor,* and *Gold of Zurrian.*

Performance: The long-liner has a jump drive rating of 4, with 1G acceleration capability. Its fuel tankage of 440 tons allows it to handle only one jump before refuelling, and to cruise at 1G, maintain life support and environment, and generally operate with moderate efficiency for about 4 weeks. This is extended to 44 weeks if the ship doesn't jump or refuels prior to jumping.

Special Features: In merchant service, the single greatest threat to a ship is hijacking. Ships are themselves extremely valuable and extremely mobile. A well-planned hijacking can net the hijackers a ship nominally worth MCr526.4, and easily sold for MCr200 on the black market.

As a result, this sort of ship is designed to foil hijackings. The crew quarters, the drive rooms, and the bridge are all behind solid bulkheads accessible through a limited number of portals. These accesses can be guarded by the crew in the course of their normal activities, with back-up safeguards operated by the ship's computer.

At the same time, the ship must compete for passengers against other ships in merchant service. One way to attract passengers is to offer high quality accommodations. The long-liner offers high- and mid-passage staterooms.

For social and entertainment purposes, the long-liner has two full lounges and an annex lounge. Each lounge can serve alternately as a dining area, a dance floor, an exercise area, a holographic entertainment stage, and a game room. Passenger comfort and satisfaction are of extreme importance, and the lounges are a primary way of achieving it.

Operations: As described below, Tukera Lines builds and operates the long-liners described, generally carrying its own speculative cargos. Tukera makes a profit from every stage of operation, including construction and financing of the vessel. For a vessel in private operation, typical costs and revenues are also detailed below.

Refuelling: The long-liner has interior fuel tanks totalling 440 tons capacity, sufficient to support one jump-4, and to operate the power plant and

maneuver drive. The 20-ton launch/lifeboat has its own 1-ton fuel tank. The ship is equipped with fuel scoops and a fuel purification plant, and can refuel by skimming gas giants.

Manufacturers: The Tukera long-liner is built by Tukera's own shipyards throughout its operating area. Tukera has licensed the design to other constructors such as Boulogne Shipyards in the Solomani Rim.

REVENUE BREAKDOWN

The information below is based on one trip per two weeks, and is for one trip.

Revenue: The ship has 50 staterooms available for passengers and crew, and 6 emergency low berths. Cargo hold capacity is 130 tons.

Passengers: With the staterooms full, the ship can carry 24 high passengers and 12 middle passengers and expect an income of Cr336,000 for one trip. If all are middle passengers, this income can reach as low as Cr288,000. Vacancies can reduce this income still further.

Low Passengers: The emergency low berths do not carry passengers, but can be used for survival. Each holds four persons.

Cargo: The ship can carry up to 130 tons of cargo, and return Cr130,000 per trip if the hold is filled.

Costs: The ship has a series of continuing expenses including fuel, ship payments, life support, maintenance, salaries, and berthing costs.

Fuel: The ship requires 400 tons of fuel for each jump-4, and 20 tons of fuel for the power plant for each trip of two weeks. Refined fuel is available at a cost of Cr210,000 (Cr500 per ton). Unrefined fuel can be purchased (Cr42,000; Cr100 per ton) at starports, or is available free from gas giants or oceans. Unrefined fuel can be safely used, thanks to the ship's fuel purification plant.

Ship Payment: If the ship is being purchased with installment payments, the monthly ship payment amounts to Cr2,193,334 or Cr1,096,667 per trip.

Life Support: Life support costs amount to Cr2,000 per passenger or crewmember (normally 50 occupied staterooms). Assuming a full ship, the long-liner would pay Cr100,000 per trip for life support.

Maintenance: In anticipation of annual overhaul, the ship should allocate a portion of each trip's income for maintenance. This amounts to Cr21,056 (0.1% of cash price of ship per year) per trip.

Salaries: The crew is paid according to a standard monthly salary scale. For the standard crew for this ship, salary is Cr25,000 per trip (half month).

Berthing Costs: Berthing costs are unpredictable, but can be approximated at Cr100 per trip.

Assuming a full ship (passengers and cargo), the long-liner can expect revenues of Cr466,000 per trip. Costs associated with that trip amount to Cr1,452,823, giving a net loss of Cr986,823 per trip.

Tukera Lines, of course, does not operate the long-liner in this manner. As an example, using the skills of broker-4 and trader-3, the typical long-liner travelling between Vland and Tauri, carrying speculative cargo purchased by Tukera Lines, produces a net profit of Cr437,177 per trip. This assumes that "free" fuel is scooped from the gas giant at Vland, unrefined fuel is purchased at Tauri, and plentiful cargo exists at both sites.

Tukera, with its skilled operators and large cash flow, can fly the long-liner at a profit, but it would be difficult for the average independent operator to do the same thing, unless he had trader-3 and a variety of available cargos at each port.

Ship's Operating Fund: The long-liner's income and expenses pass through a fund managed by Tukera Lines officials at the ports at which the vessel

stops. All salaries, fuel and maintenance costs, and other expenses are paid from the fund, and all income generated by the ship goes into it.

INTERIOR DETAILS

The specific interior fittings of the long-liner are standard Imperial designs.

Bulkheads: The major structural components of a ship are bulkheads which achieve a compartmentalization of the ship for damage control and environment maintenance in the event of disaster. A concerted effort with an energy weapon or explosive must produce 1000 hit points of damage in order to create a person-sized hole. Bullet-firing weapons are ineffective against bulkheads. All deck floors are assumed to be bulkheads.

Interior Walls: Interior walls are partitions: non-load-bearing panels firmly fixed in place. They are not pressure-tight and cannot withstand a concerted assault. Firing 100 hit points at such a wall with an energy weapon will burn a hole large enough for one person to pass through; an explosion which produces 100 hit points of damage will produce the same effect. Weapons firing bullets are less efficient in doing this sort of damage; such a weapon must produce 1000 hit points before a person-sized hold is created.

Sliding Doors: Set in interior walls are sliding doors. Such doors save space over more conventional swinging doors, and are standard on most starships. They are not air-tight and serve merely as privacy screens. They may be broken down in the same manner as interior walls.

Sliding doors are powered and open completely (assuming that ship's power is functional) when a stud on the wall next to the door is pressed. Sliding doors may be locked (from either side or from the ship's computer); a red light shows on the stud panel to indicate this fact. Shipboard courtesy considers locked doors a call for privacy, and it is respected except during emergencies. When ship's power is not functioning, sliding doors will not open automatically, but can be manually overridden with brute force (throw strength or less to open; DM -4 if a metal lever such as a crowbar is used).

Iris Valves: Iris valves are pressure-tight automatic portals set in bulkheads. A valve functions much like the iris of a camera: many panels retract to leave an open passage or extend to block the portal with solid metal. Iris valves may be horizontal or vertical.

Iris valves are operated by pressing a stud on the wall next to the valve. A valve may be locked from either side or by the computer, and a red light shows on the panel to indicate this condition. Iris valves cannot be forced closed if already open. In addition, a simple mechanical indicator shows if both sides of the door are in normal pressure.

Valves are very difficult to force open once fully closed. Throw strength or less to force open a closed iris valve: DM -4 if metal lever or rod is used to pry the valve open, DM -2 if dexterity 10+, -3 if the person is in a vacc suit, +2 if ship's power is off, +8 if locked. Gunfire and explosions simply block the valve tighter. Iris valves close automatically when a pressure difference is sensed between the two sides of the bulkhead. They will not close fully until the valve is clear of any foreign objects (like legs, hands, etc.).

Where iris valves pass through a deck or ceiling, a ladder is provided as well.

Lift Shafts: These are automatic elevator platforms installed in various places throughout the ship to provide easy transport between decks. They operate in the same manner as elevators.

Vertical Access: All vertical access (except for the lifts and stairs) is by hatch. All the hatches display indicators on the bridge security station. In

addition, the hatches on decks A, B, and C ring audible alarms both at the hatches and at the bridge. These are also plainly marked "EMERGENCY USE ONLY" or "AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY" in the case of turrets.

LANDING THE LINER

Although the ship is streamlined, many starports do not possess the facilities to support ships of its size at the downport. Such a vessel's needs are better served from orbit. Thus a typical flight will be from orbit to orbit, with the launch providing any interaction with the world's surface.

The ship has two options if a planetary landing is required. First, the ship could make a wet landing. The vessel is designed to be quite at home in the water. Finally, if the ship is landing in a well-developed world, a ground support cradle is available. Streamlining was provided mainly to assist in skimming for fuel, and for emergency landings.

The ship's scoops are built into the inboard leading edges of the wings. The ship has a fuel purification plant to refine the fuel.

The landing cradle is used at many high tech, high volume downports to handle large ships. The model in the diagrams is for use with cylindrical ships of 750 to 1,500 tons. Other models are available, with up to 5,000 tons capacity. The grav generators in a cradle ease landings and aid liftoff. The cradle scoots around the starport under grav power. Because of the cost of cradles, even the largest ports have only a few. (Regina in the Spinward Marches has only 5.) In such cases, berthing costs skyrocket, and five to ten times the standard rates are not uncommon. Needless to say, most large ships prefer to remain in orbit.

INTERIOR CONDITIONS

Normal conditions generally approximate those of a livable world surface.

Light: Most areas are fully and comfortably lighted. The intensity of light can be varied by computer instructions or by simple wall switches. Some areas (such as cargo holds) may be poorly lit. Others (such as the bridge) may be lit with blue-green light to preserve night vision of personnel stationed there.

If ship's power fails, emergency lighting powered on a separate back-up circuit takes over in inhabited areas of the ship (but not the cargo hold or other unused sections). Backup power will last for 12 hours of continuous use, after which it will fail unless recharged.

Atmosphere: The interior of the ship will normally be pressurized to standard atmosphere with an oxygen/nitrogen gas mix.

Temperature: The interior temperature of a normal ship is about 20° C.

Plumbing: Each stateroom contains sanitary facilities for individuals, including shower, toilet, and washbasin.

Gravity: The long-liner has grav plates built into its flooring. These plates produce standard gravity within the ship's interior. Acceleration compensators are also installed to negate the effects of high acceleration and lateral G forces while maneuvering. The passengers on the ship would be unable to tell whether they were moving through space or grounded on a planet without looking outside.

In the event of power failure, the grav plates will revert to the off configuration and the ship will be in zero-G.

Power: The power plant provides power to all interior mechanisms; they continue to function as long as power is supplied. A prominent power-on switch (with appropriate safeguards) is located on the bridge and in the drive room.

Kagamira Subsector

The Kagamira Subsector (subsector F of the Vland sector) is an old, well-established subsector, with a rich history spanning ten thousand years. Even though the earliest Vilani explorations went rimward and trailing, most of this subsector (which is spinward of Vland) was well settled by the time the First Imperium came on the scene.

Thousands of years of development have wrought vast changes; the Third Imperium worlds of today bear little resemblance to their original beginnings. Many worlds have ruins and relics of several past ages; the majority of these reflect the glory that existed in this region before the Long Night.

The Uris Belt has a Naval Construction Yard specializing in large ships fashioned from the belt's planetoids.

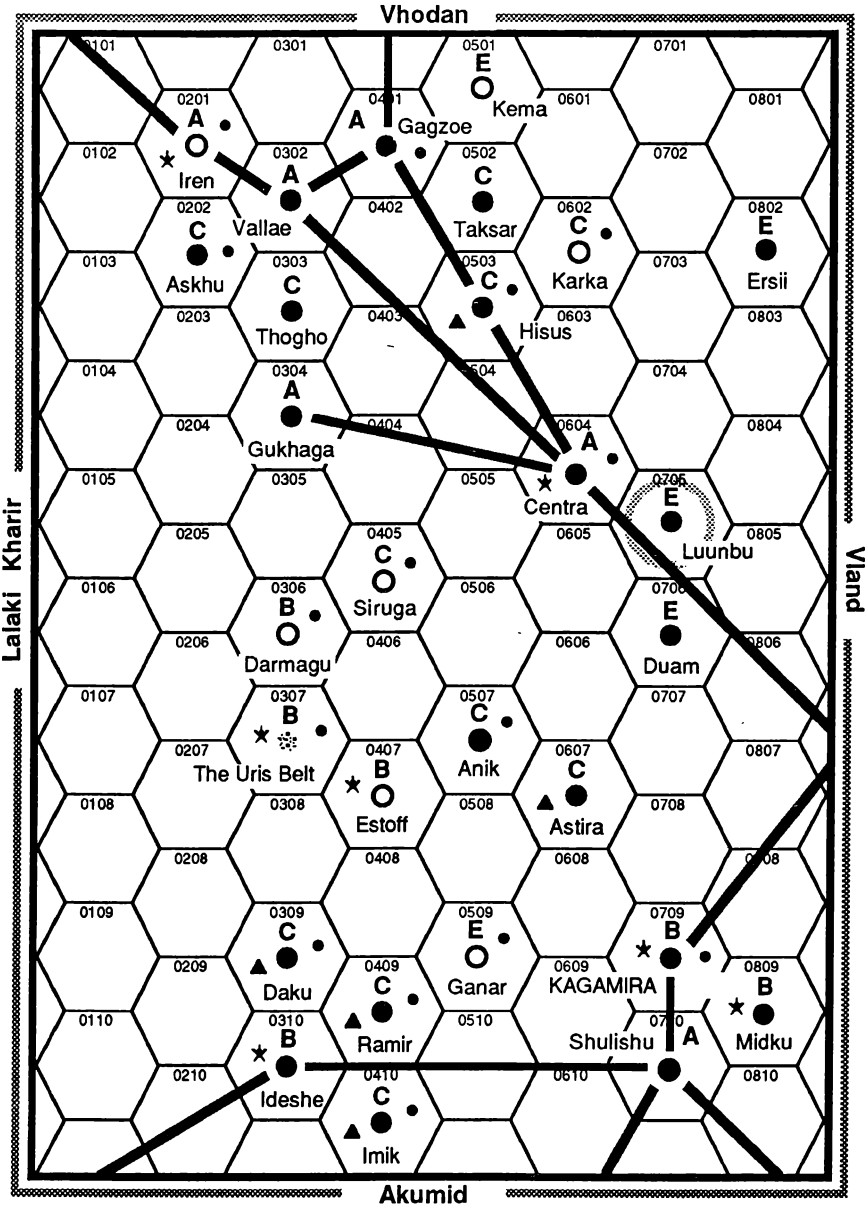
Kagamira, the subsector's capitol world, was industrialized centuries ago, and the prodigious output of its factories is known throughout the Vland Sector.

Umbrellas are advised for any travellers to Luunbu; its tainted atmosphere occasionally rains down nitric acid.

Kagamira subsector has no desert worlds.

Name	*Location*	*UPP*	*Bases*		*Remarks*		
Iren	0201	A8C189E	B	N			G
Askhu	0202	C554120	7		NonInd.		G
Vallae	0302	A897788	9		Agricultural. Ancients site.		
Thogho	0303	C898669	7		Agricultural. NonInd.		
Gukhaga	0304	A877476	F		NonInd.		
Darmagu	0306	B412312	E		NonInd. Ice-Capped.		G
The Uris Belt	0307	B000464	E	N	NonInd. Asteroid belt.		G
Daku	0309	C332620	C	S	NonAg. NonInd. Poor.		G
Ideshe	0310	B969557	A	N	NonInd.		
Gagzoe	0401	A585320	B		NonInd.		G
Siruga	0405	C100559	E		NonInd. Vacuum world.		G
Estoff	0407	B6B6330	E	N	NonInd.		
Ramir	0409	C66A222	C	S	NonInd. Water world.		G
Imik	0410	C263203	C	S	NonInd.		G
Kema	0501	E100233	B		NonInd. Vacuum world.		
Taksar	0502	C432345	9		NonInd. Poor.		
Hisus	0503	C7787BF	6	S	Agricultural.		G
Anik	0507	C441569	A		NonInd. Poor.		G
Ganar	0509	E200527	7		NonInd. Vacuum world.		G
Karka	0602	C200876	7		NonAg. Vacuum world.		G
Centra	0604	A592541	E	N	NonInd.		G
Astira	0607	C55238C	A	S	NonInd. Poor.		
Luunbu	0705	E8A6255	B		NonInd.	A	
Duam	0706	E464769	7		Agricultural. Rich.		
Kagamira	0709	B477983	F	N	Industrial. Subsector capital.		G
Shulishu	0710	A352498	D		NonInd. Poor.		
Ersii	0802	E361431	8		NonInd.		
Midku	0809	B764485	8	N	NonInd.		

The Kagamira subsector contains 28 worlds with a total population of 6.929 billion. The highest population is 5.1 billion at Kagamira; the highest tech level is F at Kagamira and Gukhaga. All worlds are members of the Imperium.



The Kagamira Subsector

The Vland Sector

LIBRARY DATA OF THE SECTOR —by Nancy Parker

Voskhod	Vhodan	Anarsi	Theton
Lalaki Kharir	Kagamira	Vland	Shiigus
Dusa	Akumid	Kasear	Anakod
Parsi	Daangillu	Nullsud	Kakadan

Vland: Subsector Key

Corsairs: Units of Vargr corsairs are located at 1104 Gvaellekh, 1202 Anghurr, 1901 Ghurrllekh, 2203 Angvae, 2501 Khugan, 3002 Ksuerrgh, 3003 Khughfudz, and 3201 Thoegzknaedz, as well as just beyond the sector borders. Until the Newcastle (1801 Anarsi) affair in late 1100, the corsairs' depredations had been confined to shipping in the coreward edge of the sector. When Newcastle's government was captured, Navy and system defense boats in Vhodan, Anarsi and Theton subsectors were put on alert.

Daama/Anarsi (1904 B-576438-9): This sparsely settled world is a smuggler'sparadise. Its non-aligned status keeps it free from Imperial restrictions, and its close proximity to Gemid supplies it with a variety of black-market goods. The system is equipped with a gas giant for cheap fuel, and is only jump-2 from three different worlds just across the border in the Imperium. It is jump-3 from Anarsi, the subsector capital. The Marquis of Gemid is the latest in a long line of ineffectual rulers.

Gemid/Anarsi (1903 A-423979-G) : Imperials rarely visit this world except to purchase its famous high tech weaponry, especially neurotoxins. Its high population and scarce resources have led to the custom of ritual killing of the old. Before a person can have children, his own parents must be dead, and if they are not dead when a child is born, they are expected to be killed shortly after the new birth. Culturally, Gemidians adapt to this custom in various ways. It is common for married couples to wait until they are in their forties or fifties before starting a family (this is possible thanks to Gemid's high medical technology). Children of important figures in society may hold off having children of their own until the parent has died a natural death.

A Naval base is fortified here to keep the Vargr and neighboring non-aligned states from getting at Gemid's military technology. However, no pressure is being exerted to bring the world into the Imperium, because of its unusual culture.

Newcastle/Anarsi (1801 C-567669-8) : This system recently learned the hard way that system defense boats are essential for border planets. A band of Vargr corsairs overwhelmed the relatively low-tech defenses and took over the planet completely. Although it is believed the pirates may tire of actually administering a world and take off again, by that time many of its resources will have been stripped. It is not known if the Imperial Navy intends to come to the aid of this client state. Officials have refused comment.

Referee: The Vargr corsairs who captured Newcastle were acting under the direction of the Church of the Chosen Ones. Administrative control of this planet is now ultimately in the hands of Onggzou, the Church's Listener for the area

including Anarsi subsector.

A world's status as client state can take many forms in the Imperium. Some treaties are for mutual or unilateral defense of a system. Others concern themselves only with interstellar commerce. Most treaties are a combination of defense and trade agreements.

Newcastle's status as a client state meant only one thing: Imperial goods were free of import duties or restrictions. The new leaders of Newcastle have pledged to uphold this earlier agreement. The Imperium will not take any action in this case, other than to increase its protection of other worlds nearby.

Tauri/Vland (1817 A-130998-E) : Tauri was the first planet to be visited by Vilani explorers, before the First Imperium was formed. Although originally colonized as a scientific research station, its population has grown to extremes over the millenia. Because of its strategic position as a first world on the Vland main, its economy is supported mainly by banking and commerce flowing through its port, rather than by onworld industries.

Zurrian/Vland (2316 A-463436-F) : Zurrian produces the famous surshi cloth. This fantastically expensive substance is produced by a local insect which has been altered and conditioned to spin its webbing in sheets of delicate, iridescent material. Attempts to raise these insects elsewhere have failed. The natives of Zurrian keep hives of them as other humans keep bees, and harvest the cloth periodically. The local aristocracy claims 10% of the harvest but otherwise leaves the populace to its own devices. The cleaned cloth is shipped all over the sector, and beyond—for those who can afford it. It is strong for its weight and a surshi garment retains its beauty for many years.

More library data of the Vland Sector and the Xboat Routes of the Vland Sector will appear in issue #5.

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— J. Andrew Keith
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Accidents and Mishaps

THE GAMING DIGEST —by Joe D. Fugate Sr.

"Roll 8+ to avoid a mishap when crossing the badlands in your ATV, with a DM of plus your ATV skill...", or "Roll 7+ to avoid a mishap while climbing the rock cliff...", or "Roll 10+ to avoid a mishap when setting the explosive charge, plus your demolitions skill...", and so on. A multitude of special mishap rolls for a multitude of special cases from a multitude of sources, accompanied by a multitude of frustrations when you try to remember where you saw that special mishap roll.

Special case rules are fine when they expand on the major elements of an adventure, such as special mishap rules for ATVs in an adventure featuring a trek across some treacherous terrain *in* an ATV. But scattering special case rolls throughout an adventure for handling a jumble of "mini-situations" creates frantic page flipping and worse yet, bored players. Likely as not, the referee will simply avoid the issue entirely, which leads to "flat" adventures, and (you guessed it) more bored players.

One answer is a *general-purpose* system for handling the myriad of "mini situations" that can (and should) occur in any well-run adventure. The system should have an appearance of depth and detail (and thus seem realistic), yet resolve quickly so it doesn't bog down the game. Save the special case rules for the times when the extra detail *is* the adventure.

The Universal Task Profile designed and promoted by Digest Group Publications fulfills the goals of being general-purpose and quick to resolve. We have found liberal use of this system to yield a "meaty" adventuring session: you feel like you've done a whale of a lot of adventuring in one evening.

In this issue, we'll expand on the UTP system presented earlier, to include a way to handle mishaps.

Unsuccessful Task Attempts

When you fail a task attempt (see the UTP section, pp. 15,16), you roll on the Failure Table (see table 1). The table is easy to remember since it mirrors the 3-7-11-15 breakdown (each level is 4 more than the last) used for the difficulty levels.

Ordinarily, you roll 2D on the table, which means you only have an 8% chance of a mishap. Some tasks, however, can be declared hazardous. You roll 3D on the failure table when you fail a hazardous task, which increases your chance of mishap to a whopping 50%. You'd better make sure you know what you're doing (translation: make sure you have a favorable DM) before you attempt DIFFICULT or FORMIDABLE tasks that are hazardous.

Once a failed task attempt yields a mishap result, you roll on the Mishap Table (also with the 3-7-11-15 breakdown for easy recall). If your mishap result from the failure table was Mishap (2D), roll 2D on the table; for Mishap (3D), roll 3D on the mishap table (see table 2).

A SUPERFICIAL mishap represents more of a frustration or complication than a dangerous or harmful event. In the absence of a specific mishap you may think of, impose superficial damage to some vehicle or device: it was damaged, but it still works. An additional option is to impose 1D wounds (a bruise, cut, or scrape) to appropriate party members. The wounding can be done either in conjunction with or instead of the damage to objects.

A MINOR mishap is more serious; genuine damage has been done. Impose minor damage to some vehicle or device: now it doesn't work and will have to be fixed. As an option, impose 2D wounds (equivalent to club or blade) to selected party members.

When a MAJOR mishap occurs, the damage or wounding is serious. A vehicle or device will receive major damage, and/or some party members receive 3D wounds (equivalent to a gun shot).

DESTROYED is the worst of all: a tragic mishap has occurred. A selected vehicle or device has been destroyed, perhaps beyond all hope of repair, and/or some party members may receive 4D wounds (often enough to maim or kill).

Of course the damage probably needs to be repaired, and for this consult the damage and repair rules (see the UTP section; damage and repair was also the subject of last issue's Gaming Digest).

Putting it Into Practice

Two characters have been trying to find a way out of a canyon they're in. They finally decide to climb out: they've found a likely spot that's steep, but less so than the surrounding terrain.

We decide the task is ROUTINE, but hazardous (high risk of a mishap upon failure). Dexterity can be used as a DM. The average climbing time is, say, 45 minutes. We divide by 10 to get the time base: 4.5 minutes. We'll round the time base to 5 minutes to keep things simple. So our final UTP is:

To climb out of the canyon:
ROUTINE,dex,5 min (hazardous)

Our two character's UPPs are:

character #1: 85B9A6
character #2: 7A6887

Who will go first? After a brief discussion, it is decided that character #1 should go first. He has the worst dexterity, and thus is more likely to fail and perhaps get hurt. If he does get hurt, character #2 can probably rescue him, since character #2 has the better chance. Character #1 has a DM of 1 (just barely) because of his dexterity, while character #2 has a DM of 2 from his dexterity (see the UTP section for details).

Character #1 starts his climb. A 7+ is needed to succeed at a ROUTINE task; he rolls an 11, plus his DM of 1 gives 12. Made it! (phew). Character #1 rolls 3D for task duration and gets 11. Subtracting his DM of 1 gives 10. Five minutes times 10 gives a total task duration of 50 minutes.

Character #2 starts his climb. He rolls 2D and gets a 4, plus his DM of 2, gives 6, a failure. A roll 3D (because the task is hazardous) on the failure table results in an 8: check determination.

Rolling 3D to see how long the first attempt took results in 7. Minus the dexterity DM of 2 gives 5: character #2 has been climbing for 25 minutes. He "failed" and must stay determined to avoid an increase in task difficulty (see the UTP section for details). He has a DM of 2 for determination and needs 11+ to stay determined (a DIFFICULT task). He rolls 5, plus his DM of 2 gives 7: not enough (mumble).

He's going to keep trying anyway, but the task has now deteriorated to DIFFICULT (now he needs 11+ to succeed; it was 7+ before).

On the next attempt, character #2 rolls a 10, plus 2 gives 12. More than enough for the needed 11+. Rolling 3D for task duration gives 3 (good roll!), minus the dexterity DM for a modified roll of 1. But the minimum for a task duration is three time periods (see the UTP section), so 3 it is, for a duration this time of 15 minutes.

Adding in the first attempt we end up with a total of 40 minutes for the climb. Even with the complications character #2 still beat character #1's time.

Let's say character #2 had failed his second attempt. He again rolls on the failure table (remember its 3D for hazardous tasks) and rolls a 12. This time he got a Mishap(2D).

He must now roll 2D (as indicated) on the Mishap table, which he does. He rolls a 7: Minor mishap. We decide he must roll 2D for wounds—he must have slipped and fallen. He rolls 10, which we decide to distribute evenly rather than insisting on "first-blood". We apply 4 points to strength, 3 to dexterity and endurance for a final wounded UPP of 376887.

He's got some good cuts, scrapes, and bruises, but not much more. He's going to be sore for a few days. And, of course, his DM for dexterity is down to 1 from its original 2.

This leads to an important pointer for referees: make the UTP work for the adventure to add interest and excitement to a situation. Avoid being overbearing with inappropriate results.

The above mishap incident is a good example. We could have insisted on first-blood application of wounds, which would probably make the character go unconscious. We chose instead to lessen the effects of the mishap slightly in the interest of keeping the adventure moving.

Random dice have no idea of the difference between an exciting adventure and an utterly frustrating one; you know your players and the situation much better than do your dice. The UTP and the dice are a tool for adding on-the-spot detail to a task: so be creative in your application of inappropriate results.

That's not to say severe mishap results are always inappropriate. Consider a character who has no DMs and attempts a DIFFICULT, hazardous task. If he winds up getting a DESTROYED mishap, he's probably getting what he deserves for such foolhardiness. Four dice damage doesn't always kill, but it can put your character in the hospital for the duration of an adventure.

Herein lies one of the greatest advantages of the UTP: it consistently defines tasks, leaving little doubt of the risks involved. Players won't even *attempt* a FORMIDABLE hazardous task without adequate skill and preparation (which might be an interesting side-adventure in itself).

Next issue we'll deal with some fun UTP examples. For instance, have you ever thought of using a series of UTP rolls to decide the outcome of a high-speed air/raft chase? Done properly, the series of rolls can keep the whole group on pins and needles as they try to lose their pursuers. We'll give some general guidelines for getting maximum benefit from the UTP system. See you then!•

Table 1: Failure

Die	*Result*
2	reroll
3+	Retry
7+	Check determination
11+	Mishap (2D)
15+	Mishap (3D)

Table 2: Mishaps

Die	*Result*
2	reroll
3+	SUPERFICIAL (1D)
7+	MINOR (2D)
11+	MAJOR (3D)
15+	DESTROYED (4D)

Law Enforcers

A NEW CHARACTER TYPE

—by Robert Parker

As the interstellar traveller travels from world to world, he or she will routinely encounter members of the local world's law enforcement. Law enforcers can be found on any world with a law level of 2 to 13 (D).

For worlds with a law level of 14 (E) or more, roll up law enforcers using the Marine career in basic **Traveller**; this reflects the paramilitary nature of law enforcement on these worlds.

Ex-law enforcers can be a useful addition to an adventuring party. Law enforcers often have many of the same skills as the Rogue character type (such as streetwise), without the likelihood of being wanted on one or more worlds.

Ex-law enforcers occasionally become private investigators. An adventuring group may find a private investigator to be a valuable hireling.

Law enforcers typically have good investigative skills; their forensic skill is particularly valuable for investigating the scene of a crime.

Together with a few tables from basic **Traveller**, this article contains all you need to generate a law enforcer. Initial character generation, acquiring skills and expertise, mustering out, aging, and retirement pay are all handled as described as in basic **Traveller**, using the tables in this article where appropriate. Skills and benefits not found in basic **Traveller** are described at the end of this article.

PRIOR SERVICE TABLE

Law Enforcers

Enlistment	**6+**
DM +1 if	Intel 7+
DM +2 if	Dext 10+
Survival	**6+**
DM +2 if	Intel 7+
Position	**6+**
DM +1 if	Endur 7+
Promotion	**8+**
DM +1 if	Educ 8+
Re-enlist	**6+**

AUTOMATIC SKILLS

Patrolman	Streetwise-1
Detective	Interrogation-1
Chief	Administration-1
Commissioner	Liaison-1

TABLE OF RANKS

Rank 0	Patrolman
Rank 1	Corporal
Rank 2	Sergeant
Rank 3	Lieutenant
Rank 4	Detective
Rank 5	Chief
Rank 6	Commissioner

MUSTERING-OUT TABLES

Table 1	1	Low Psg
Material	2	+1 Intel
Benefits	3	Forensic Kit
	4	Weapon
	5	High Psg
	6	+1 Social
	7	Travellers'

Table 2	1	1000
Cash	2	2000
Benefits	3	5000
	4	7500
	5	10000
	6	25000
	7	50000

The first occurrence of a weapon benefit is taken as one physical example of any personal weapon found in basic **Traveller**; it must be taken immediately. Additional occurrences of weapon may be declared as skill in the weapon previously taken.

Characters with rank 5 or 6 may add +1 to their rolls on these tables. Characters with gambling skill are allowed a DM of +1 on table 2 (rank and gambling skill DMs are not cumulative). A maximum of three rolls on table 2 are allowed per character; all remaining rolls must be made on table 1.

Forensic kit allows possession of a forensic kit as described in the "Skills and Benefits" section. Second and subsequent occurrences of forensic kit may be taken as forensic skill. Additional occurrences of Travellers' are treated as no benefit.

Personal Development		Service Skills	
1	+1 Strength	1	Streetwise
2	+1 Dexterity	2	Vehicle
3	+1 Education	3	Carousing
4	Brawling	4	Brawling
5	Bribery	5	Blade Combat
6	Gambling	6	Gun Combat

Education Table		Advanced Education (Edu 8+)	
1	Forgery	1	Legal
2	Forensic	2	Leader
3	Streetwise	3	Administration
4	Tactics	4	Interview
5	Technical	5	Forensic
6	Interrogation	6	Liason

Characters consult this set of tables during each term of service. A character must have an education characteristic of 8 or greater in order to use the fourth table. Blade combat, gun combat, vehicle, and technical are cascade skills which call for additional specification by the character immediately.

SKILLS AND BENEFITS

For the most part, skills presented here are identical to those available in the basic **Traveller** rules; the new skills are:

Interview: The character is skilled in conversing with others individually. By his knowledge of psychology, body language, and oral communication, the character is able to draw others out; the person being interviewed will be more apt to discuss things with the interviewer than they would with someone without interview skill. A character with interview-6+ may be suspected of being psionic.

Referee: Half of any interview skill level (round down) is a plus DM on the reaction table when used initially in an encounter. Those with interview skill know which line of questioning to follow when trying to learn something from an uncooperative subject. Interview skill may be used as 2 levels lower in interrogation skill; thus, interview-3 may be used as interrogation-1 where needed.

The maximum benefit of this skill is obtained only when the interviewer is in a pre-arranged conversation with 1 or 2 individuals. Time spent in preparation is important; situations in which preparation is inadequate are more difficult.

Interview skill can also aid in detecting a lie; a UTP to detect a lie in a certain pre-arranged question-and-answer session might be:

ROUTINE, interview, int, 10 seconds

REFEREE: this task is NON-REPEATABLE; only one try allowed

Forensic: The character is skilled at gathering and interpreting evidence

available at the scene of a crime or accident. Skill level 1 indicates fundamental detective skills, level 3+ is an expert investigator. Special forensic equipment is required for some types of evidence. Crude forensic equipment is available at tech level 5; forensic equipment from higher tech levels is more reliable and gives more detailed information (some is available in a hand-carried forensic kit).

Referee: Forensic skill is used as a DM when searching for evidence at the scene of a crime or accident. Specific throws for specific situations must be generated (the UTP system is handy for this). Types of available evidence may include:

Without any special equipment...

biological materials (bloodstains, hair, skin fragments)
telltale marks (vehicle tracks, tool marks, marks on a body, footprints)
material fragments (dirt, paint, glass, clothing fibers)
odors (tobacco, perfume, gunpowder, gasoline)
criminal psychology (behavior of suspects, motives)

In the field using special equipment...

skinprints (fingerprints, pawprints; TL 5)
recordings of scene(photos; holograms, TL 11)
firearm residues (TL 5)
body fluid types (handkit TL 6)
poison tests (handkit TL 6)
gasses in air (handkit TL 7)
clandestine methods (invisible inks, microdots; handkit TL 5)
portable x-rays (handkit only, TL 9)
radiation scans (TL 6)
molecule samples (handkit only,TL 12; see this issue's Tech Briefs)
note: may be determined in the field with special equipment starting at the indicated tech level. Portable equipment to determine the same appears in the handkit two tech levels later. Thus the handkit contains equipment to do radiation scans at TL 8+.

In the laboratory...

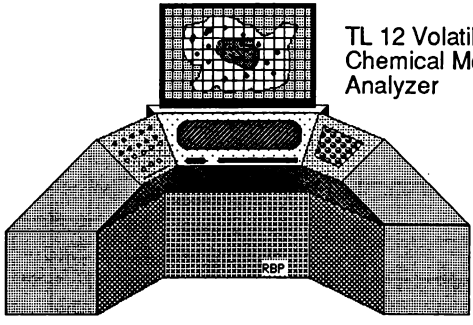
autopsy (need a minimum of medic-1)
genetic matching
additional analysis of material fragments
additional analysis of biological materials (blood typing, hair analysis)
computer reconstructions from holo-recordings (TL 11)
radiation analysis
molecular analysis (TL 12; see this issue's Tech Briefs)
detect forgery (need a minimum of forgery-1, includes art objects)
reconstruct destroyed materials
voiceprint analysis (TL 7)
handwriting analysis

Technical: The character must immediately choose one of computer, communications, electronic, mechanical, or medical skills.

Forensic Hand Kit: Starting at tech level 6, a forensic handkit is available for use by law enforcement characters. The type of tests possible with this kit varies with tech level, as indicated in the forensic skill description.•

Forensic Science

TRAVELLER TECH BRIEFS —by Robert and Nancy Parker



TL 12 Volatile Chemical Molecular Analyzer

Forensic science, the application of science to gathering evidence in a criminal investigation, is at once an old and a young science. On the one hand, it must attempt to keep pace with the latest weapons and criminal ingenuity. On the other hand, the human body, which is often the object of study, has not changed significantly for at least 30,000 years. (Similiar statements can be made about forensic science among most alien races.)

Crucial to catching a criminal is establishing identity. This concept means, to an investigator, not only determining who a criminal is, but also that a given piece of evidence is a unique member of its class. A shoe print, for instance, may be classified by such characteristics as size, style, and make, but this description may fit many thousands of people in a given city—even if the criminal has not already left on an interstellar liner. The unique characteristics that establish identity within the class include wear and damage patterns and characteristics of a person's gait.

Living beings have numerous unique traits for for identification. Not only fingerprints and retinal patterns, but footprints, hair, body chemistry, bite patterns, saliva, and blood can be positively identified. DNA from any recovered cells must, of course, be scanned immediately before it deteriorates. Cells are expelled from the body (and left at a crime scene) even by breathing.

For detectives with access to technology of tech 12 or greater, a tool of choice for investigating a crime scene is the volatile chemical molecular analyzer, or "sniffer". The sniffer can detect and analyze chemicals in concentrations of as little as 1 part per 10 million. Possible significant finds include artificial scents worn by a criminal, traces of alcohol or drugs or food odors, ozone from the firing of an energy weapon (or accidental

electrical discharge), and the breath and body chemicals of persons who have been in a room more than about 3 minutes.

Unless an individual was wearing a filter mask and impervious clothing, or the air was completely exchanged by ventilators before a sniffer could be used, sufficient volatiles can usually be recovered to make positive identification possible. Race and sex of an individual can be identified even after only two minutes in the room, which aids in eliminating suspects. Explosives and gun discharges will also remain in the air.

After the sniffer has collected its sample, the next step in an investigation is to holograph the crime scene from three vantage points carefully chosen to allow complete three-dimensional reconstuction of the scene at any later date.

Biology is the key to the next steps. If it is a violent crime, the victim must be examined carefully. (Of course if the victim is still alive, medical aid is the priority and further examination will be done in a hospital.) If dead, how long has the victim been dead? Chemical changes in body cells occur according to a specific timetable. Each of the major races is different in this respect.

Gross signs include: body temperature with relation to ambient temperature; pooling of blood in parts of the body lowest in the position the body has rested (note this if the body has been moved; also, this is not necessarily valid in zero-G); rigor mortis, which sets in a few hours after death but dissipates again at about 24 to 48 hours later; and state of decomposition, which depends on surrounding conditions.

Much finer time definition can be obtained by a laboratory of tech 9+; if the body is frozen for shipment to such a lab, note must be made of freezing time and duration and conditions of the trip.

How did the victim die? Drowning, fire, asphyxiation, poison, and physical violence each leave characteristic signs on the body. One type of death may be passed off as another unless an alert investigator and a coroner of tech 6+ work together. Nor must natural or accidental death be mistaken for murder.

A victim often comes in physical contact with his assailant, or the criminal handles the victim or the victim's belongings. Even by being in the room briefly, the criminal may leave a hair, a few skin cells, a trace of sweat or body oil, and of course, fingerprints. If a victim fights his attacker, blood or sweat will be on the victim's hands or under his fingernails.

If shot from a distance, however, for a motive other than robbery or sexual assault, no trace of the attacker will be on the body. A special vacuum cleaner, along with the sniffer, is used to collect body cells, clothing fibers, fragments of glass, paint, plastics, wood, stone, or metal, and for dust or dirt.

Of interest to the investigator will be blood and saliva types. All body fluids have the same type as the blood, but about 15% of humans are non-secretors and their other fluids are untypeable. (This varies for alien races.) Fluid typing is a quick way to narrow down a range of suspects, especially applicable on a planet with many diverse races.

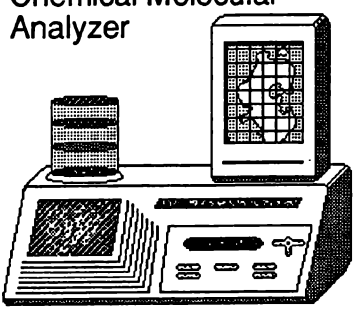
It is a well known fact that Vargr, Aslan, Droyne, and other different races have different blood chemistry. Less known, but equally important to the criminal investigator, is the fact that the different human populations differ slightly as well. This was especially true for widely separated populations such as those on Vland during the First Imperium, Terra, Zhodane and among several of the minor human races found in known space.

As an example, pure-blooded Solomani have blood types in the A,B,O,M,N,Z series, but are predominately A,B,O. Pure-blooded Vilani have C,D,M,N,O types, but C,N types are dominant. Zhodani have the series F,G,P,Q,R,V,Z with F, Q,V,Z predominating. While the Zhodani population is still relatively isolated from the rest of humankind, a pure-blooded Vilani or Solomani is a rare occurrence in the Imperium of today. Nevertheless, percentage of ancestry is still a determining factor in blood types.

Although there is some overlap, the investigator can eliminate many of the suspects to a crime with a high degree of accuracy. Of course this does not eliminate them as accomplices, but it does eliminate them as the persons on the scene.

Both the crime scene and all suspects should be searched for inanimate evidence. Matching characteristics for glass and stone include specific gravity, trace chemical amount, refractive index (for glass and mica) and jigsaw fit.

TL14 Volatile Chemical Molecular Analyzer



RBP

Fracture lines in glass and plastics show direction of impact and order of multiple impacts. (Tempered or bullet-proof barriers often distort or eliminate such evidence.) Where pierced or melted by energy weapons, the power and wavelength of the weapons can be determined, as well as angle of attack. Bits of anything scraped off may be chemically matched to suspected originals by spectrography (TL 4) or neutron activation analysis (TL 8).

Wounds caused by different types of weapons will show different ballistics and other characteristics. Wounds caused by slug weapons will show signs of

impact, and in the case of a close shot, powder residues will be found around the wound. Plasma and fusion weapons also leave their own impact marks, uniquely identifying the type of weapon used.

Sometimes a more powerful energy weapon will disrupt tissues in a manner similar to slug weapons, but, a close examination of the tissues will determine the presence or absence of powder burns or cauterization. Comparison of the chemical analyses of normal and disrupted tissue will also determine the nature of the wound.

With all energy weapons, including lasers, the following chemical changes occur: at the surface, oxidization from the burn; further in, because of the lack of oxygen, different things happen. Proteins are denatured. Sugars turn to esters like alcohol. Fats are converted to aldehydes. These chemical changes do not occur to such an extent in the case of a slug weapon.

A blade weapon is much more straight forward. The investigator does not have to contend with the massive disruption associated with firearms. Even when strange things are done with a blade, such as twisting or sawing, it is still very much a cut or series of cuts. An impact weapon, such as a club, staff, or on more primitive worlds, a mace or morning star, will crush tissues and break bones but will not have the extreme penetration of a firearm.

In the case of projectile weapons, the investigator can determine the caliber of the weapon. He can differentiate entry wounds from exit wounds. Frequently the slug or flechette can be recovered. An expended projectile will carry markings from the weapon that fired it, facilitating the identification of the weapon. Projectiles from Gauss weapons have no markings at all.

Stolen property can be identified in many ways. Most obvious are registrations or serial numbers. Other means include encoded information on the property such as the name and address of the owner. Also, a personal access or identification number can be used. Fingerprint or retinal information, and metabolic scans or recordings can also be used. Such information should be concealed or put in such form as to be nearly or completely inalterable. If this is not possible, identification would have to be by means of looking for specific wear marks.

Devices for detecting intruders and giving the alarm vary from simple trip-wires connected to bells, to robots with sophisticated pattern recognition and security software. In addition to alarm signals, some devices will shoot, blockade, or drug the suspected intruder.

At tech level 11, sophisticated mobile crime labs become inexpensive and compact enough to fit inside a van-sized air/raft. Describing the details of the high-tech mobile crime lab is beyond the scope of this article. For those who would like more details, a good

starting point is the lab tests listed under forensic skill in the Law Enforcers article in this issue.

Specifications: Volatile Chemical Molecular Analyzer

The volatile chemical molecular analyzer, or "sniffer" can detect and analyze chemicals in concentrations of as little as 1 part per 10 million. Under ideal conditions it can directly detect and match DNA molecules, allowing a positive identification of the individual who committed the crime. A UTP to simulate this might be:

To get a positive DNA match:
FORMIDABLE, forensic, edu, 5 min.
REFEREE: this task is NON-REPEATABLE; only one try is allowed

Sniffers consist of two components. The hand-held sampler, massing about 1 kg, is used to sample the air and debris of a site. The extracts are stored in a removable cartridge which is taken back to the lab to be thoroughly examined by a much larger analyzer. A complete analysis requires about one hour per sample. The cartridge is not reusable.

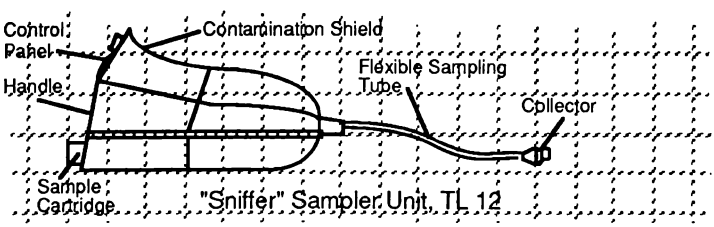
The hand-held sampler masses about 1 kg, and is roughly 11x11x50 cm. About 25 cm of the sampler's 50 cm length is a flexible sampling tube about 5mm in diameter. In order to avoid contamination of samples, the sampling tube can be flexed and positioned remotely by controls on the back of the unit. The handhold is also located on the back of the unit, again to avoid contaminating the sample.

Samples are stored in a small (6x2x10 cm) cartridge that plugs into the back of the unit. Procedures generally call for several samples to be made, each one labeled as to its source. Ideally, the samples will be analyzed soon after being collected, since some types of evidence are perishable (such as DNA molecules).

The TL 12 analyzer is a large desk-sized (75x190x200 cm) unit with a flat screen control/display terminal. The sample cartridge is inserted into a slot on the unit. Complete analysis requires about an hour.

The TL 14 analyzer is a desktop unit (30x40x65 cm), identical in function to the TL12 analyzer.•

Hand-held sampler	1 kg	TL 12	Cr 6500
Sample cartridge	0.1 kg	TL 12	Cr 75
Analyzer unit	150 kg	TL 12	Cr 850,000
Analyzer unit	30 kg	TL 14	Cr 1,200,000



"Sniffer" Sampler Unit, TL 12

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